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The Impact of a Grade Nine Transition Program on Student Success in the Piedmont Region Area of North Carolina

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Approval Page

This dissertation was submitted by Phillip Jermaine Johnson under the direction of the persons listed below. It was submitted to the Gardner-Webb University School of Education and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education at Gardner-Webb University.

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Abstract

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This dissertation was designed to evaluate the effectiveness of the Grade 9 transition program at an urban high school in the piedmont area of North Carolina. Grade 9 is a pivotal year that determines which students prevail and which students fail to finish high school (Hertzog, 2003). It is essential that schools put in place components that ease the transition into high school and provide ongoing support.

Investigation measuring instruments that were used by the researcher included a student survey and a teacher survey which involved Grade 9 students and those teachers who taught Grade 9 students. The data that were collected from both instruments were tabulated to identify if there were common themes. Results indicated whether or not the practices in place had a positive impact on student behavior and his/her attitude towards school.

Recommendations for further research were included after the data from both instruments were tabulated and analyzed.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Introduction

Grade 9 is a pivotal year that determines which students prevail and which fail to finish high school (Hertzog, 2003). In 2004, Black indicted that nearly 20 years ago, the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) asked, "How fares Grade 9" (p. 42)? The NASSP commissioned middle school experts John Lounsbury and J. Howard Johnston to conduct an extensive study of Grade 9 students in 48 states and the District of Columbia (Black, 2004). More students failed Grade 9 than any other grade in high school, and a disproportionate number of students who were held back in Grade 9 subsequently dropped out (Herlihy, 2007). Students who failed courses during the first semester of high school were more likely to experience further deterioration in their school performance and not likely to recover (Roderick & Camburn, 1999).

The Cumulative Promotion Index (CPI) calculates the high school graduation rate using a series of grade-to-grade promotions (Education Week, 2007). The CPI compared the number of Grade 10 students in 1 year to the number of Grade 9 students in the previous year to estimate the percentage of Grade 9 students who were promoted. Education Week (2007) found the same calculation for the other grades (11th to 10th, 12th to 11th, and graduates to 12th) then multiplied these four ratios to arrive at an estimated graduation rate (Education Week, 2007). The CPI allowed researchers to pinpoint where students were lost. The results showed that students in Grade 9 were the leading source of loss.

A 1998 study of Grade 9 students (450 high schools and their feeder middle schools) showed that failing Grade 9 spelled doom for about 25% of Grade 9 students nationwide (Wheelock & Miao, 2005). Wheelock and Miao (2005) further stated that

there was a disproportion of Grade 8 and Grade 9 student enrollments. Wheelock and Miao also found that Grade 9 enrollments were 23-27% higher than Grade 8, and attrition between Grade 9 and Grade 10 hovers around 20% for African-American students. Wheelock and Miao further included in their research that White students enrolled in Grade 9 were 6-8% higher than Grade 8, while attrition between Grade 9 and Grade 10 were stable around 7% (Wheelock & Miao).

Nature of the Problem

Globally, in 2006 the United States was ranked 17th in high school graduation rates and 14th in college graduation rates among developed nations (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2006). In 2009, the U.S. ranked 21st out of 27 OECD countries when it came to high school graduation rates, according to Andreas Schleicher, Deputy Director for Education for the OECD (Cardoza, 2013). Nationally, fewer than 30% of Grade 8 students scored proficient on the 2005 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) mathematics and/or reading tests (Education Week, 2007). Even when achievement was measured by local standards, most states had at least one-quarter of their students entering high schools with scores below proficient in math and/or reading on Grade 8 student assessments (Education Week, 2006).

High schools that include Grades 9-12 present the greatest problems for young adolescents, according to researchers Mizelle and Irvin (2001). According to Isakson and Jarvis (1999), one of the issues students experienced was a decrease in achievement from middle school to high school. Suddenly, many students in Grade 9 found themselves struggling to navigate large, impersonal, competitive environments far different from their more comfortable middle schools (Mizelle & Irvin). Many students made smooth

transitions, but others were lost in the maze of corridors, fast-paced schedules, and rigorous course requirements (Black, 2004). Nevertheless, young adolescents today frequently have a difficult time making the transition into high school (George, 1999). As young adolescents make the transition into high school, many experience a decline in grades and attendance (Barone, Aguirre-Deandreis, & Trickett, 1991). The transition to high school has also been accompanied by negative consequences for some students including achievement loss (Alspaugh, 1998). Academic failure during the transition to high school was directly linked to the probability of dropping out (Legters, 2000).

During the first half of the 1970s, there were less than 4% fewer students enrolled in Grade 10 than in Grade 9 the previous year (Haney, 2003). Nationally, a recent study of public school enrollment patterns showed that (1) there was a sharp increase in the number of students enrolled in Grade 9 over the last 30 years, indicating that an increasing number of students were being retained; and (2) the rate at which students disappeared between Grade 9 and Grade 10 has tripled over the same time period (Haney, 2004). National estimates put the student attrition rate before Grade 10 between 11 and 33% (Dedmond, Brown, & LaFauci, 2006).

During 2001, some states had a disproportionate percentage of student enrollments in Grade 9 and Grade 10 (Wheelock & Miao, 2005). For example, Florida, South Carolina, Georgia, and Texas had grade enrollments that were 20% smaller than the Grade 9 enrollments the previous year (Wheelock & Miao, 2005). Across the nation, school policymakers are grappling with what to do about the increasing number of students who do not advance beyond Grade 9 (Wheelock & Miao, 2005). Students who failed courses during the first semester of high school experienced further deterioration in their school performance and were not likely to recover (Roderick & Camburn, 1999).

Table 1 shows the enrollment by grade for North Carolina public schools. From 2003-2008, Grade 9 consistently had the highest number of students enrolled by grade level.

Table 1

North Carolina Student Enrollment by Grade
Excludes Charter Schools

	8th	9th	10th	11th	12th
2003-2004	111,005	126,888	102,807	88,468	76,095
2004-2005	111,692	130,576	106,441	91,898	79,025
2005-2006	113,138	132,665	110,669	96,238	82,291
2006-2007	111,989	134,609	111,828	98,920	85,376
2007-2008	112,281	135,693	111,036	99,539	87,341

Note. Adapted from North Carolina Department of Public Instruction ([NCDPI], 2008b).

All over America, thousands and thousands of Grade 9 students were and had been painfully failing (Mizelle & Irvin, 2001). The number of students who disappeared between Grade 9 and Grade 10 has tripled over the past 30 years (Courrege, 2004). A related cause for concern was the increase of students who were stuck in the Grade 9 bottleneck and failed to progress into Grade 10 on time (Wheelock & Miao, 2005). Grade 9 has become the holding tank for high schools (Hertzog & Morgan, 1999). Nationwide, Boston College researchers found that Grade 9 student enrollment bulges had grown in all but three states: Arkansas, Louisiana, and Maine (Viadero, 2006). The percentages of extra students in Grade 9 were 15% more in 12 states (Viadero, 2006). The bulge has grown from 4% in 1970 to 13% in 2000 (Viadero, 2006).

Wheelock and Miao (2005) shared that as of 2001, 13% more students were enrolled in Grade 9 than in Grade 8 during the previous year nationwide, while the bulge can be much larger for some states. For example, in Florida, as many as 32% more students were enrolled in Grade 9 than Grade 8 the previous

year (Wheelock & Miao). Wheelock and Miao further explained that the largest dip in enrollment from 1 year to the next was now between Grade 9 and Grade 10 (Wheelock & Miao). Table 2 data shows the United States Public School Enrollment during a 2-year period. The table consists of enrollment changes and the percentage of change during that timeframe. The data show a loss of students which was a result of student dropout.

Table 2

United States Public School Enrollment (Millions) 1998-2005

Year	Enrollment	Enrollment Change	Percentage of Change
1998-1999	3.86	-	-
1999-2000	3.42	(440,000)	-11.4%
2003-2004	4.19	-	-
2004-2005	3.75	(440,000)	-10.5%

Note. Dash indicates that data are not obtained or reported. Adapted from Wheelock and Miao (2005).

Table 3 shows the nonpromotion rate (%) by grade for North Carolina public schools. From 2002-2008, Grade 9 consistently had the highest percentage of nonpromotions, almost twice the amount of the second highest grade level.

Table 3

North Carolina Nonpromotion Rate (%) by Grade 2002 – 2008

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
02-03	6.6	6.6	3.3	3.7	1.5	1.9	2.7	2.7	3.0	14.3	8.6	6.0	2.5	4.9
03-04	6.1	5.9	3.0	3.2	1.2	1.5	2.4	2.7	2.7	14.3	8.1	5.9	2.8	4.7
04-05	6.1	5.6	3.1	2.8	1.2	1.4	2.5	2.6	2.2	14.0	8.4	6.4	2.8	4.6
05-06	5.5	5.3	2.9	2.4	1.4	1.4	2.5	2.5	2.5	14.9	9.4	7.1	2.9	4.8
06-07	4.8	4.8	2.7	3.4	2.0	3.7	2.4	2.7	3.3	14.5	8.3	6.8	2.7	4.9
07-08	4.8	4.7	2.6	3.3	1.5	3.2	2.1	2.4	3.3	15.8	9.5	7.6	2.9	5.0

Note. Adapted from NCDPI (2008b).

An analysis of enrollment data revealed that there has long been substantial variation in rates of student attrition between Grade 9 and Grade 10 (Haney, 2003). Between 1984-1985 and 1985-1986, when the rate of attrition between Grade 9 and Grade 10 nationally stood at a little less than 5%, six states had attrition rates of 10% or worse: Georgia 16.5%, Texas 14.9%, Louisiana 13.2%, South Carolina 11.5%, Kentucky 11.2%, and Virginia 10.0%. Ten states showed a Grade 9 to Grade 10 attrition of less than 2%: California, Minnesota, Nebraska, Nevada, Utah, Kansas, Wyoming, South Dakota, Hawaii, and Wisconsin (Haney, 2003).

The list of states with attrition rates between students in Grade 9 and Grade 10 of more than 10% had more than tripled (Haney, 2004). Haney (2004) further stated that as the number of states with Grade 9 to Grade 10 attrition rates more than tripled, the Grade 9 to Grade 10 attrition rates nationally had more than doubled during that same interval, from less than 5% to more than 11%. What is striking about the list of states is that it included not just southern states (the only ones with such attrition rates of more than 10% in the mid-1980s) but also northern and midwestern states such as New York, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Ohio, and Michigan (Haney, 2003). Enrollment of the 112,000 students of Charlotte-Mecklenburg School District, Charlotte, North Carolina, caused a school watchdog group to see a 29% bulge among Grade 9 students as early as 2002 (Viadero, 2006).

Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation (MDRC) research in four urban districts suggested that as many as 40% of students failed to get promoted from Grade 9 to Grade 10 on time, and fewer than 20% of those students recovered from failure and went on to graduate (Kemple, Herlihy, & Smith, 2005). Students who do recover and are promoted find that by the end of Grade 10, as many as 6% drop out of school (Owings &

Peng, 1992).

Smink and Schargel (2004) made a poignant statement:

> Every September, approximately 3.5 million young people in America have entered grade eight each year. Over the succeeding four years, more than 505,000 of them drop out–an average of nearly more than 2805 per day of the school year. Picture it: Every single school day, more than 70 school buses drive out of America's school yard, filled with students who will not return. (p. 9)

The national graduation rate in 2004 was estimated to be 68%, with nearly one-third of all public high school students failing to graduate (Swanson, 2004). In the 35 largest central cities in the United States, between 40 and 50% of high schools graduate less than half of their Grade 9 class in 4 years (Balfanz & Legters, 2004). In addition, as many as 60% of those students who were identified as *at-risk* for failure going into high school will not graduate with their class (Green & Scott, 1995). The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) panel advised the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) on ways to track graduation rates and suggested that students be tracked by unique identifiers throughout their education. However, only a fraction of the states have identification systems (NCES, 2004). Among public high school students in the class of 2008-2009, the average freshman graduation rate (AFGR) was 75.5%; that is, just over 3 million students graduated on time. Wisconsin had the highest graduation rate, at 90.7% (NCES, 2012). Fifteen other states had rates of 80% or more (ordered from high to low): Vermont, Minnesota, North Dakota, Iowa, New Jersey, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Missouri, Nebraska, Montana, South Dakota, Idaho, Pennsylvania, Kansas, and Maryland. Nevada had the lowest rate, at 56.3% (NCES, 2012). Seven other states and the District of Columbia had graduation rates below 70% (ordered from high to low):

Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, South Carolina, New Mexico, the District of Columbia, and Mississippi (NCES, 2012).

See Table 4 for the Urban School District, High School 4-Year Graduation Rate. The table includes a comparison of School X and other schools within Urban School District in which the study took place.

Table 4

Urban School District, High School 4-Year Graduation Rate (%)

	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
School 1	71.8	77.7	68.9	63.4	83	81.5
School 2	73.3	66.6	71.0	69.5	79.4	81.7
School X	77.5	78.2	76.9	75.2	80.4	87.1
School 3	81.0	80.8	76.3	83.3	90.7	88.4
School 4	84.5	76.5	82.6	81.2	85.6	90.2
School 5	-	-	95	92.1	91.7	95
School 6	-	-	-	-	95	95

Note. Dash indicates that data is not obtained or not reported. Adapted from NCDPI (2008b, 2012).

See Table 5 for the 2007-2008 Cohort Graduation Rates. The table includes information for the state of North Carolina including subgroups used to measure Annual Yearly Progress (AYP). Results for the school district and School X in which the study took place are defined as well. The table is composed of subgroup graduation results from North Carolina, Urban School District, and School X. The results were adapted from NCDPI's (2008b) Report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee: Annual Report on Dropout Events and Rates G.S. 115-C-12(27).

Table 5

4-Year Cohort Graduation Rate (%)
2007-2008 Entering Grade 9 Graduating in 2010-2011 or Earlier

	North Carolina	Urban School District	School X
All Students	77.9	84.1	80.4
Male	73.8	81.4	76.1
Females	82.2	86.9	85.7
Native American	69.7	> 95	-
Asian	86.9	90.3	71.4
Black	71.5	76.9	64.1
Hispanic	68.8	70.0	67.6
Multi-Racial	77.2	81.0	80.0
White	82.6	87.6	86.2
Economically Disadvantaged	71.2	74.6	67.3
Limited English Proficient	48.1	50.0	62.5
Students with Disabilities	57.2	59.4	33.3

Note. Dash indicates that data were not obtained or not reported. Adapted from NCDPI (2012).

According to Barton (2005), in 2003, 3.5 million youth ages 16 to 25 did not have a high school diploma and were not enrolled in school. Fifteen percent of U.S. high schools produce 50% of the country's dropouts, and every state in the nation has some high schools with very low graduation rates (Balfanz & Legters, 2004). As of 2004, only six states had the majority of their high schools showing graduation rates of 90% or higher (Balfanz & Legters, 2004). According to the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI, 2008a), State Board policy High Student Performance series (HSP-Q-001) defined a dropout as "any student who leaves school for any reason before graduation or completion of program of studies without transferring to another elementary or secondary school" (p. 9). NCDPI broke the definition down into smaller pieces.

According to Wyant (2008), Brief 2, Assessing the North Carolina Dropout

Challenge, the Dropout Data Collecting and Reporting Procedures manual,

> a student is counted as a dropout if he/she meets the following criteria: Student was enrolled in school at some time during the reporting year; student was not enrolled on day 20 of the current year; and student had not graduated from high school or completed a state or district approved educational program and has not met any exclusions. (p. 8)

To demonstrate the North Carolina High School Dropout Rates by Race/Ethnicity and Gender: 4 Years 2007-2008 through 2011-2012, see Table 6 for dropout data for North Carolina Public Schools found in the Report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee: Annual Report on Dropout Events and Rates G.S. 115c-12(27).

Table 6

North Carolina High School Dropout Rates by Race/Ethnicity and Gender: 5 Years (%)

Subgroups	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
Am. Ind. Female	6.05	4.21	4.00	3.34	3.68
Am. Ind. Male	7.89	6.62	5.65	4.84	4.51
Asian Female	1.46	1.44	1.19	1.29	0.95
Asian Male	2.82	2.21	2.09	1.48	1.64
Black Female	4.53	4.11	3.75	3.28	2.8
Black Male	7.33	6.38	5.79	5.26	4.47
Hisp Female	6.28	5.23	4.20	4.00	3.19
Hisp Male	7.52	6.15	5.34	5.32	4.53
Multi Female	4.3	3.86	2.94	2.83	2.56
Multi Male	5.86	5.13	4.15	3.5	3.42
White Female	3.62	3.13	2.68	2.4	2.15
White Male	4.85	4.07	3.53	3.3	2.96
Pac. Isl. Female	-	-	-	3.52	3.33
Pac. Isl. Male	-	-	-	4.57	2.34

Note. Dash indicates that data were not obtained or not reported. Adapted from NCDPI (2008b, 2012).

To demonstrate the contrast between the dropout rate and the Cohort Graduation Rate, see Table 7 for dropout data for North Carolina Public Schools found in the Report

to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee: Annual Report on Dropout Events and Rates G.S. 115c-12(27). For example, in Table 5, the dropout rate for 2010-2011 is reported at 3.43%; however, the freshmen class of 2007-2008 who should have graduated in 2010-2011 only graduated 77.9% of their students. This does not necessarily indicate that 22.1% of those students dropped out. It only indicates that they did not graduate within 4 years; however, it does indicate with more accuracy, that students are not graduating on time and that in all probability more than 3.43% are not graduating at all.

Table 7

Dropout Rates for North Carolina and Urban School District 2006-2011
Five Years: Dropout Rates in Grade 9 through 12, Excluding Expulsions

Year	North Carolina	Urban School District
2006-2007	5.27	4.77
2007-2008	4.97	4.76
2008-2009	4.27	4.27
2009-2010	3.75	2.54
2010-2011	3.43	2.57

Note. Adapted from NCDPI (2008b, 2012).

To demonstrate the Urban School District High School Dropout Counts and Rates 2006-2007 through 2010-2011, see Table 8 for dropout data for North Carolina Public Schools in the Piedmont Region found in the Report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee: Annual Report on Dropout Events and Rates G.S. 115c-12(27).

Table 8

Urban School District High School Dropout Counts and Rates 2006-2007 through 2010-2011 Piedmont Region

	2006-2007		2007-2008		2008-2009		2009-2010		2010-2011	
District	#	Rate	#	Rate	#	Rate	#	Rate	#	Rate
Rowan-Salisbury	380	5.47	380	5.54	221	3.34	276	4.24	214	3.36
Catawba	236	4.15	230	4.02	175	3.08	149	2.65	130	2.34
Iredell-Statesville	307	4.52	242	3.52	208	2.96	166	2.36	159	2.27
Urban School District	338	4.77	394	4.76	359	4.27	218	2.54	225	2.57
Union	315	3.15	357	3.40	329	3.01	231	2.04	233	2.02
Gaston	684	6.29	607	5.69	583	5.60	448	4.43	450	4.46
Charlotte-Mecklenburg	2512	6.39	2355	6.10	1976	5.52	1637	4.15	1404	3.57

Note. Adapted from NCDPI (2008b, 2012).

To demonstrate Urban School District 2010-2011 High School Dropout by Gender, Race and Ethnicity, see Table 9 for dropout data for North Carolina Public Schools found in the Report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee: Annual Report on Dropout Events and Rates G.S. 115c-12(27).

Table 9

Urban School District 2010-2011 High School Dropout by Gender, Race/Ethnicity

Total	Male	Female	White	Black	Am. Indian	Hispanic	Asian	Pac. Islander	Multi Racial
225	135	90	115	61	< 5	40	< 5	< 5	7

Note. Adapted from NCDPI (2012).

Drop-out prevention is an important area of study because cost for individuals who drop out of high school can be estimated into billions of dollars (Buckley, Storino, & Saarni, 2003). Across the country, 68% of state prison inmates do not have a high school diploma, and according to researchers, a 10 percentage-point increase in graduation rates has historically reduced murder and assault rates by approximately 20% (School Library Journal, 2008). Funding aimed at crime prevention, prosecution programs, welfare

programs and unemployment programs can be extremely costly (Buckley et al., 2003). School programs that were designed to reduce dropout rates would clearly benefit all stake holders, including policy makers, educators, and families, as well as society as a whole (Christenson & Thurlow, 2004).

Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this project was to analyze the impact of a Grade 9 transition program on student success in the Piedmont region of North Carolina using a quantitative research study. Successful Grade 9 transition programs are built on the foundation of good schooling through Grade 8 (Mental Health in Schools, 2011). The findings of this study will assist administrators in designing the most effective transition programming for their incoming Grade 9 students.

Background and Significance of the Problem

The setting is the Urban School District where the study took place in the Piedmont region of North Carolina. The Local Educational Agency (LEA) was the 10th largest school district in North Carolina and ranked 313th in size nationally (Cabarrus County Schools [CCS], 2008). According to Urban School District (CCS, 2008), the school system grows by approximately 1,500 students a year. Table 10 data show the Urban School District's Enrollment and schools during the 2011-2012 school year. The total number of students enrolled at the elementary is 13,133; middle is 6,268; high and alternative schools is 7,310 of Urban School District within the county.

Table 10

Urban School Districts Schools 2011-2012

	Elementary	Middle	High	Special Needs
Total # of Schools	19	7	7	2

Note. Adapted from CCS (2008).

According to North Carolina School Report Card 2009-2010 (NCDPI, 2010), the district outperformed the state average in every ABC accountability system end-of-course (EOC) test category including English I, Algebra I, and Biology. The urban district, as defined by federal law, did not exceed the state's percentage of 98% of classes taught by highly qualified teachers by posting a 94% figure for middle and high schools only. The district's 2009-2010 graduation rate was 74.5% (NCDPI, 2010). In addition, the district's 2009-2010 per pupil expenditure was $7,591. The school district borders a major metropolitan city. The geographical area where the research was conducted is furthest away from the metropolitan city.

The high school targeted in this study was in an urban setting in the Piedmont region of North Carolina. The school consisted of Grades 9 through 12 and served approximately 1,376 students with a 99% average daily membership rate. The school's graduation rate was 75.2%, according to the NCDPI (2010) 2009-2010 Annual Report on Dropout Events and Rates. The percentage of students who received free or reduced lunch at the research site was approximately 33.62% (CCS, 2010), and the percent of exceptional children was approximately 17.4%. The performance of the school on the ABCs EOC tests including the courses in English I, Algebra I, and Biology had a passing rate of 83.8% in 2009-2010. However, the school earned the designation of school of

distinction due to meeting the standard of high growth as defined by North Carolina for which 80% to 90% of students performed at grade level (NCDPI, 2010). There were 102 classroom teachers employed at the school, of whom 98% were highly qualified as defined by federal law, 16% had advanced degrees, and 13 teachers were National Board Certified. The teacher turnover rate was 10% compared to 12% for the district and state (NCDPI, 2010).

The setting in which the research took place was a large high school (School X). School X was in a single story building that was approximately 10 years old. School X contained 71 classrooms composed of 10 departments: English, science, mathematics, social studies, world languages, career and technical education, fine arts, physical education, JROTC, and special education. School X offered sports such as football, volleyball, basketball, wrestling, track, tennis, swimming, softball, cross country, soccer, and cheerleading (CCS, 2011).

Table 11 data show subgroup breakdown of the population in Urban School District by percentages. The demographics are closely mirrored to the makeup of the county in which it resides. The diversity of School X played a major role in determining the impact of intervention program on student successes.

Table 11

Urban School District Ethnic Population (%)

Ethnicity	Percentage
Africa American	17.20
American Indian	0.40
Asian American	2.20
Caucasian	64.60
Hispanic	11.30
Multi-Racial	4.30

Note. Adapted from CCS (2008).

Research Questions

The following questions were investigated during the research process:

1. What is the impact of absenteeism during implementation of the transition program for Grade 9 students during the 2011-2012 school year?

2. What impact does the transition program have on teacher and student perception of student success?

3. How does the transition program improve student performance by the academic indicator of English 1, between Grade 9 students during the 2011-2012 school year implementation of the transition program and Grade 9 students during the 2010-2011 school year prior to the implementation of the transition program?

Definition of Terms

ABC. The ABCs of Public Education is North Carolina's comprehensive plan to improve public schools. The plan is based on three goals: (1) strong accountability, "A"; (2) mastery of basic skills, "B"; and (3) localized control, "C." The ABCs were implemented in 1996-1997. The model focuses on schools meeting growth expectations for student achievement as well as on the overall percentage of students who score at or above grade level. The model uses end-of-grade (EOG) tests in Grades 3-8 in reading and mathematics to measure growth at the elementary and middle school levels and EOC tests to measure growth at the high school level and at the middle school level where appropriate. Schools receive recognition based on student growth and the percentage of students' scores at or above grade level (NCDPI, 2011).

At-risk. The term at-risk originated in psychological and medical research. Wang (1994) defined at-risk in the context of education, referring to those students who face social, academic, and environmental factors, which are present in the family, school, and

community, which place them in danger of academic failure.

Attrition rate. A factor, normally expressed as a percentage, reflecting the degree of losses of personnel or material due to various causes within a specified period of time (Farlex, 2011).

Dropout. Any student who leaves school for any reason before graduation or completion of a program of studies without transferring to another elementary or secondary school (Bonneau, 2006).

Intervention program. A school-based effort to improve student overall academic achievement, promote social behavior, and enhance problem-solving skills.

Piedmont region. One of North Carolina's three eastern parts of the state's physiographic regions (University of North Carolina Chapel Hill [UNC-CH], 2005).

Secondary school. A school that is intermediate in level between elementary school and college and that usually offers general, technical, vocational, or college-preparatory curricula (Farlex, 2011).

Summary

This dissertation presents a description of research cross-sectional designed to explore the impact of a Grade 9 transition program on student success in the piedmont region of North Carolina pertaining to a (a) belief that students are motivated to complete their school assignments, (b) belief that students are motivated to attend school, (c) belief that teachers care about their students, (d) belief that students care about their education, and (e) belief that parents are involved with their students' education. The study was supported by research through literature that connected to student transition and national, state, and local graduation rates. According to Kerr (2002), a student transition to high school plays an important part in determining his/her future educational pathway.

According to Wheelock and Miao (2005) some states had a disproportion percentage of student enrollments in Grade 9 and Grade 10. Among public high school students in the class of 2008-2009, the AFGR was 75.5% (NCES, 2012). Chapter 2 provides an overview of literature research associated with student transition, student promotion, establishment of common schools, and variables that relate to one another.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction and Purpose

The purpose of this project was to analyze the impact of a Grade 9 transition program on student success in the Piedmont area of North Carolina using a quantitative research study. Successful Grade 9 transition programs were built on the foundation of good schooling through Grade 8 (Mental Health in Schools, 2011). The findings of this study will assist administrators in designing the most effective transition programming for their incoming Grade 9 students.

Research of Literature

According to Eric Brown (2004), during part of the 19th and 20th century, common schools were used throughout the United States. Brown further stated, "these early common schools often included just one or two classrooms" (p. 2). These schools tended to contribute to the social context of their communities by sponsoring special events including elections and religious gatherings (Fuller, 1994). The employers and parents came to believe that children needed schooling beyond the elementary level (Hough, 1995). According to DeYoung (1989), secondary schools experienced considerable growth during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. At first, many of the one-room schools were replaced with two-tiered schooling arrangements, with Grades K-8 in elementary buildings and Grades 9-12 in secondary schools (Hough, 1995). Eventually, in most locales the Lancastrian system was largely supplanted by adoption of graded schools (Kliebard, 2002). Kliebard (2002) further stated that under this new system, students were grouped according to age and advanced through sequential grade levels. The 8-year elementary and 4-year high school pattern dominated much of the 19th century (Manning, 2000). According to Manning (2000), this 8-4 pattern provided

large numbers of students with opportunities for basic skills, vocational training, and prepared a small number to attend college.

There is substantial literature that has documented the problems and negative effects of Grade 9 transitions to high school (Wheelock & Miao, 2005). Some researchers have recommended student orientation programs such as summer school programs for at-risk students (Legters & Kerr, 2001).

Students who experienced failure in the transition from middle school to high school will more than likely face many more failures throughout their academic careers (Bandura, 1989). The Grade 9 failures will breed further failures for the students in this position (Bandura, 1989). Bandura (1995) also included, "that the belief in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required managing prospective situations" (p. 2). According to the Bandura (1989) theory of efficacy, success in Grade 9 almost ensures continuing success throughout the course of student high school careers. In other words, self-efficacy is a person's belief in his or her ability to succeed in a particular situation. Bandura (1994) described these beliefs as determinants of how people think, behave, and feel. The Grade 9 failures will breed further failures for the students in this position.

Blackwell (2008) identified key indicators that influence Grade 9 students in their transition year pertaining to academic achievement, retention, attendance, dropout status, and conduct. Furthermore, disadvantaged students face even greater challenges as they make the transition to high school and may lack the motivation, interest, and support needed to become successfully integrated into the new school environment (Kerr, 2002).

Nearly one-third of all high school students leave the public school system before graduating (Swanson, 2004), and the problem is particularly severe among students of

color and students with disabilities (Greene & Winters, 2005; U.S. Department of Education, 2007a). Graduation rates for Whites and Asians hover around 75 to 77%, respectively, with about one-quarter of these students failing to graduate (Greene & Winters, 2002). For minority students (Non-White), the rate at which they finished public high school with a regular diploma declined to approximately 50% (Fry, 2003). Magnus Lofstrom (2007) stated, "a substantial proportion of students do not complete high school, a problem particularly pronounced among the two largest minority groups in the United States Hispanics and African Americans" (p. 1). Most recent available data found over 30% of students with disabilities were estimated to have dropped out (U.S. Department of Education, 2007b). The majority of students with disabilities who do not complete high school tend to have emotional/behavioral disabilities (52.3%), speech or language impairments (29.4%), and learning disabilities (29.1%) (U.S. Department of Education, 2007b). Although with less data available, students with disabilities, especially those with emotional and behavioral disorders, appear to be suspended and expelled at rates disproportionate to their representation in the population (American Psychological Association, 2008). In addition, arrest rates are relatively high for students with disabilities who drop out. Approximately one-third of students with disabilities who drop out of high school have spent a night in jail, triple the rate of students with disabilities who have completed high school (Wagner, Newman, Cameto, Levine, & Garza, 2006).

Lofstrom (2007) said that chances for economic success among individuals who lack high school diplomas appear to be less likely today than at any other point in U.S. history. Snower (1999) wrote, "since the mid-1970s in the U.S., earnings of the less educated have fallen rapidly behind those of the more educated" (p. 4). The increasing

importance of skills and education was apparent for economic outcomes such as employment and earnings (Lofstrom). Perreira, Harris, and Lee (2006) found that in 2000, high school dropouts were almost twice as likely to be unemployed as high school graduates. Dropouts were much more likely than their peers who graduate to be unemployed, living in poverty, receiving public assistance, in prison, on death row, unhealthy, divorced, and ultimately single parents with children who drop out of high school themselves (Orfield, 2004).

In North Carolina, an extreme case but emblematic of a national trend, about 15% of students are now retained in Grade 9 (Jonsson, 2004). According to Jonsson (2004), some suspect a correlation with the staggering dropout rate: Nearly 1 in 5 students never return for Grade 10. Jonsson further stated that by the time retained students finish Grade 9, many are near the age at which they can quit without parental permission. According to NEWS RELEASES 2007-2008, presented to the State Board of Education on February 7, 2008, a total of 23,550 students in Grades 9-12 dropped out of school in 2006-2007, compared to 22,180 students the previous year (North Carolina Family Policy Council [NCFPC], 2008). That is the highest number of high school dropouts in 7 years, when 23,597 dropouts were reported to the state in 1999-2000. The dropout rate increased to 5.24% in 2006-2007 from 5.04% in 2005-2006 (NCFPC, 2008).

Junior High Schools Movement

The school reform focused at the turn of the 20th century on the functions and relationship of the elementary school and the high school (Manning, 2000). The National Education Association and other educational committees advocated restructuring the predominant 8-4 organization to better serve the needs of young adolescents (Manning, 2000). Although American education had never adopted a universal plan regarding

which grade levels should be included in what schools, the 8-4 plan had become very popular following the Civil War (McEwin, 2001). McEwin (2001) stated that the move to change this pattern had its beginnings in the influence of Charles Eliot, who proposed that courses be shortened and enriched to enable students to enter universities at an earlier age.

In 1905, the state of New York established seventh- and eighth-grade intermediate schools and began adding Grade 9 in 1915 (Spring, 2005). The curriculum for these grade levels was focused on vocational training, socialization, and "unifying the school life of the pupil" (Spring, 2005, p. 263). This marked the emergence of the junior high school as an opportunity "to adapt the instruction to the two sexes and the requirements of high schools and vocational schools; offer different courses of study; and classify pupils according to ability" (Spring, 2005, p. 261).

According to Manning (2000), the first 3-year junior high schools incorporating Grades 7-9 were established in Columbus, Ohio in 1909. The growth of the junior high school as an administrative unit (Grades 7-9) was rapid, with the number increasing from fewer than 400 in 1920 to more than 2,000 in 1940 (Johnson, 1962). The number reached 5,000 by 1950 and 6,006 by 1964 (Lounsbury, 1960).

McEwin (2001) further stated that additional factors influencing the acceptance of the junior high school included reports of national committees recommending this reorganization, the dropout problem, the dawning recognition of individual differences, changing societal needs, and the desire to implement innovative educational reforms. McEwin also stated that a growing realization of the extent of individual differences gained major support for the movement. The two curriculum imperatives that dominated early junior high school programs were enriched academic programs for college-bound

students and vocational programs for students heading into the job market (Manning, 2000). As the junior high school matured, a third imperative arose: meeting the unique social, personal, and academic needs of young adolescents (Manning, 2000).

Middle Schools Movement

By 1970, a small group of educators founded the Midwest Middle School Association, amid much debate and confrontation between advocates of 6-8 middle schools and 7-9 junior high schools. Three years later, its name was changed to the National Middle School Association to acknowledge the national scope of the growing middle school movement. The writings of key educators in this movement displayed increasingly widespread agreement on practices that they believed were especially appropriate for young adolescents, including interdisciplinary team teaching, discovery and inquiry methods, teacher-adviser plans, flexible schedule, exploratory courses, and ungraded programs (Board, 2011). A comprehensive study sponsored by the National Institute of Education in 1980 reported that only 4,004 junior high schools (Grades 7-9) remained in the nation (McEwin, 2001). By the year 2000, only 5% of middle-grades schools were 7-9 junior highs and 69% were 6-8 or 5-8 middle schools.

Table 12 data show the increase of the total number of middle schools in the United States from 1971 through 2008.

Table 12

Increase of Total Number of Middle Schools

Year	Total Number of Middle Schools
1971	1,434
1981	4,094
1991	6,168
2000	9,750
2008	13,100

Note. Adapted from NCES (2011).

William M. Alexander, who proposed changing to a new organization and program at a national conference at Cornell University in 1963, was one of the people who influenced the development of this new movement (McEwin, 2001). Alexander and Williams (1968) proposed that the middle school build its programs on the positive contributions of the junior high school, core curriculum, guidance programs, exploratory education, and vocational and home arts. Changes included moving Grade 9 to the senior high school, including Grades 5-8 in the middle school, providing programs based on the needs of 10 to 14 year olds, and developing transitional programs that promoted continuity in the total educational ladder (Alexander, 1964). Weiss and Bearman (2007) stated that middle schools were designed to address the specific developmental and academic needs of early adolescents; however, scholars have argued that both transitions associated with this form – moving from elementary school to middle school and moving from middle school to high school – negatively influence student outcomes.

The middle school movement developed rapidly during the last several decades of the 20th century (Manning, 2000). The National Middle School Association (NMSA, 1995) published *This We Believe: Developmentally Responsive Middle Level Schools*, which outlined the characteristics of effective middle-level schools; and other statistical reports, position papers, and textbooks on the subject followed.

Disillusionment with the junior high school is often noted as one of the reasons for the success of the middle school movement (McEwin, 2001). Evidence of this disenchantment was widespread by the 1960s (Alexander & Williams, 1965) and has continued until today. McEwin (2001) stated that problems of extreme departmentalization, teacher dissatisfaction, and poor articulation with schools at other levels, and lack of emphasis on exploratory activities are not unique to the junior high

school; but by the 1960s a major change in this institution was inevitable. The middle school movement offered a second chance for the development of schools based on the characteristics of 10 to 14 year olds (McEwin). A survey by Alexander revealed a total of 1,101 middle schools in 1967-1968 with middle schools defined as having at least three grades, no more than five grades, and including sixth and seventh grade. A survey by Kealy (1971) identified 2,298 middle schools using the same definition. The number of middle schools increased to 3,723 in 1974 (Compton, 1976) and 4,060 in 1977 (Brooks & Edwards, 1978).

According to Manning (2001), the majority of educators believed that Grade 9 should be housed at the senior high school. Schools are being reorganized into some combinations of Grades 5, 6, or 7 through 8 with 6-8 being the most popular pattern (McEwin, 2001). According to McEwin (2001), middle schools without Grade 9 have increased from fewer than 200 in 1960 to an estimated total of over 10,000 today. A 1980 survey sponsored by the National Association of Secondary School Principals (Valentine, Clark, Nickerson, & Keefe, 1981) found that the majority of over 1,400 middle-level principals at both junior high and middle schools considered 6-8 the ideal grade organizational pattern regardless of the grade organization of their own schools.

Alexander (1968) reported that the reason most often given for moving to the middle school was to eliminate crowded conditions in other schools. Overcrowding occurs when the number of students enrolled in the school is larger than the number of students the school was designed to accommodate (NCES, 2011). Overcrowded schools were more likely than other schools to report that at least one type of onsite building was in less-than-adequate condition, to have at least one building feature in less-than-adequate condition, and to have at least one environmental factor in unsatisfactory condition

(NCES, 2011). Later studies by Brooks and Edwards (1978) and Valentine et al. (1981) found that several factors provided programs better suited to the middle-level student. Factors such as earlier physical and intellectual development indicated that the majority of students enrolled in Grade 9 today are fully adolescent, are more like older students than those below them, and are more precocious and complex than those of previous generations (McEwin, 2001). McEwin further stated that even if the junior high school movement had been highly successful in obtaining its goals, the Grade 9 population of today would likely need to be moved to the senior high school.

Transition

Mizelle and Irvin (2001) stated that in the transition into high school, many young adolescents experienced a larger, more impersonal, more competitive, and more grade-oriented environment than they experienced in middle school. According to Akos and Galassi (2004a), students looked forward to making new friends, having more freedom, and attending school events as they transitioned to high school. Mizelle and Irvin further stated that students have a negative view and increased need for peer friendship during young adolescent development. Mizelle and Irvin further stated that facilitating young adolescent transitions from middle school to high school required programs that specifically addressed the transition period as well as middle school programs that challenged and supported students. Kerr (2002) noted that research on school reform and restructuring often failed to address the unique characteristics of Grade 9 students. Gilchrist, Schinke, Snow, Schilling, and Senechal (1988) defined transition as "the movement from one state of certainty to another with a period of uncertainty in between" (p. 2). The change process that occurs for students entering Grade 9 includes dealing with a new school year, a new set of teachers, a new building, and new routines both in

and out of the classroom.

Negative Aspects of High School Transition

Researchers have identified Grade 9 as the most critical point to intervene and prevent students from losing motivation, failing, and dropping out of school (Reents, 2002). Many students struggle with the shift from middle to high school where they are more likely to be left to *sink or swim* (Silberman, 2004). Weiss and Bearman (2007) stated that following the transition into high school, numerous measures of student performance plummet. A number of studies have shown that students experience a decline in grades following the transition to high school (Weiss & Bearman). Some studies suggest that an increase in the number of school-to-school transitions increases student dropout rates (Alspaugh, 2000). A student's transition to high school plays an important part in determining his/her future educational pathway (Kerr, 2002). The transition from middle school to high school can be easy; but many young adolescents experience a decline in grades and attendance, begin to view themselves more negatively, and experience an increased need for friendship (Letrello & Miles, 2003). When adolescents move into middle school or high school, the anxiety is complicated further by other normative changes such as puberty, social and emotional development, the growing importance of peer relationships, and the development of higher order cognitive skills (Cauley & Jovanovich, 2006). Young adolescents entering high school look forward to having more choices and making new and more friends; however, they also are concerned about being picked on and teased by older students, having harder work, making lower grades, and getting lost in a larger, unfamiliar school (Mizelle & Irvin, 2001). Substantial research has emerged documenting the fact that the transition into high school is marked by increased disengagement and declining motivation, particularly

for low-performing youth (National Research Council , 2004).

The student's lack of motivation could be a lack of intrinsic or extrinsic motivation. A student who lacks extrinsic motivation will not complete a task even if there is a reward or he or she can avoid punishment. Stickers, candy, certificates, public recognition, or punishment will not motivate a student to complete a task (Brewster & Fager, 2000). According to Mansfield, Miller, and Montalvo (2007), students who lacked extrinsic motivation at times dislike their teachers. Mansfield et al. supported the belief that disliking the teacher can have negative consequences on the student's performance. Contemporary theories of motivation suggested that the varying levels of effort and persistence observed in different classes and subsequent achievements are, in part, due to internal purposes students have for doing academic activities and their perceived ability (Mansfield et al.). Mansfield et al. also reported that

> caring teachers are in a better position than noncaring teachers to maintain student interest and cooperation in school, and that a student's perception of the teacher as caring or uncaring influences his or her level of engagement in school and their persistence in seeking help. (p. 34)

An individual teacher's whole classroom approach can impair enthusiasm and enjoyment in the classroom if he or she does not create an atmosphere which is conducive to learning (Phillips & Lindsay, 2006). On the other hand, some teachers do spark student motivation but fumble at maintaining it because they do not have the power to promote long-term learning (Bartholomew, 2008). The social relationships among students can also have an effect on their motivation levels. Students feel as if they receive peer pressure involving the school environment which becomes correlated with their own beliefs and actions (Ryan, 2001). When looking at the level of a student's

motivation, researchers tend to explore the interactions the student has with his/her peers, teachers, and even parents since the two are often associated with one another (Anderman & Kaplan, 2008).

Students who lack intrinsic motivation do not possess the ability to set high goals for themselves because they lack self-esteem to believe they can achieve at a higher level of learning. Researchers refer to this as a fixed mindset, which makes it difficult for a student to accept challenges because they fear that mistakes would reflect poorly on what they believe is their fixed mindset (Dweck, 2008). McPherson's (2007) research showed that students who do not believe they are good readers will hold negative beliefs about their ability to read. Burke (2008) found that when the work is too challenging or they perceive there is not enough time to complete the task, the child can perceive it as a threat and *shut down*. Burke also reported that other researchers disagree and feel that students do not shut down but instead become reflexive and respond automatically when they feel threatened. Whether students shut down or respond automatically, their reactions can be considered off-task and disruptive to the learning process (Burke). Researchers have supported the belief that intrinsic motivation is the degree to which participants report enjoying the activity, finding the activity interesting, or being willing to engage in the activity again (Cooper, Patall, & Robinson, 2008).

The decrease in student engagement is the result of unmotivated students or of school practices that fail to sufficiently interest and engage all learners (Brewster & Fager, 2000). An ample body of research suggests that the situation can be changed (Brewster & Fager, 2000). Research has shown that teachers can influence student motivation, that certain practices do work to increase time spent on task, and that there are ways to make assigned work more engaging and more effective for students at all

levels (Brewster & Fager, 2000). Student motivation is influenced by both internal and external factors that can start, sustain, intensify, or discourage behavior (Reeve, 1996). Internal factors include the individual characteristics or dispositions that students bring to their learning, such as their interests, responsibility for learning, effort, values, and perceived ability (Ainley, 2004). Certain types of schooling practices may promote or hinder motivation, such as features of the classrooms, peer groups, tasks, and instructional practices (Ainley, 2004). Yair (2000) listed techniques that promote student motivation for educational success by a variety of integrated instructional strategies and resources: an open and caring school environment, a wide range of student supports, and sharing information and responsibilities for student learning among the staff.

In fact, British researchers estimate that 10% of students suffered serious problems after the transfer to secondary school. Students were aware that time management, ability to stay on task, social skills, and positive classroom behavior are essential to high school success; but many students noted that social matters and peer relationships overshadow academic concerns in the Grade 9 (Smith, 2006). The behavior of Grade 9 students has adversely affected school climate and generated increased concerns about school safety (Herlihy, 2007). Adolescents are challenged to adjust to a new physical sense of self, new intellectual abilities, and cognitive demands (Potter, Schliskey, Stevenson, & Drawdy, 2001). Getting lost, older students, bullies, too much homework, school rules, making friends, and lockers have all been commonly cited as student concerns in the transition (Akos, 2002). Both teachers and students reported that the environment became more and more socially comparative and competitive in orientation as students moved into high school (Roeser, Strobel, & Quihuis, 2002).

Burke (2008) made a poignant statement: "off-task behavior is not new, but it can

become more noticeable and more frustrating when it is experienced in a cooperative group setting or in a whole-class activity on a regular basis" (p.161). Burke further stated, "making excessive demands on students to keep their undivided attention can create resentful and disruptive learners and an environment not conducive to learning" (p. 30). Students have to deal with the pressures of high-stakes testing, personal insecurity, and violence in their homes, schools, and society (Burke). It is difficult for students to come into the classroom and leave all of the stresses behind and focus on learning (Burke). Burke wrote, "if a child has been exposed to stress in the home-life at a young age, their brain consumes the glucose that should be used to develop patterns, recognize sounds and pictures, and develop mental stimulation" (p. 29).

Teachers need to take the time to instruct children in basic social skills to ensure they have a successful classroom management program (Bellanca & Forarty, 2003). Bellanca and Forarty (2003) stated, "when a teacher takes time to introduce the forming skills needed for basic classroom management or to teach the more complex skills at the norm or performing phases, the payoff is always greater mastery of content" (p. 79). Students' past social experiences can vary greatly, and therefore the students may not be familiar with the social skills necessary to function in the classroom (Burke, 2008). Burke (2008) also reported,

> Educators today need to do more than help students meet standards, score high on standardized tests, master the curriculum, secure jobs or get accepted into college. Educators are also responsible for teaching students how to interact in socially acceptable ways and how to develop the interpersonal skills necessary to be successful in life. (p. 1)

Academics

Academic concerns dealt with school work and teacher expectations, such as having a tough teacher or teachers who expect too much, having harder schoolwork, or having too much homework (Elias, 2001). The explosion of information within the curriculum of today's secondary schools provided sufficient evidence that teachers cannot provide all the content knowledge that students need (Deshler et al., 2001). Tougher teacher standards for academic work, reduced levels of engagement with teachers and course work, and heightened attention to the consequences of performance all accompany the move to high school (Weiss & Bearman, 2007). Weiss and Bearman (2007) further stated that with the move to high school, students are also required to take greater responsibility for their work. The students moving into high school found that there were more assignments and more distractions; they worried about the expectations of the teachers, the amount and nature of homework, taking tests, and getting good grades (Potter et al., 2001). Grade 9 students accounted for a high volume of GPAs with less than 2.0, which is the lowest measurement used in calculating a GPA, especially in the critical subjects such as English, math, social studies, and science (Jerald, 2006). Grade 9 students with less than a 2.0 GPA are more likely to drop out than graduate (Kemple et al., 2005).

Teachers need to encourage their students to choose the level of challenge that is most appropriate for his or her individual learning. Suarez (2007) explained that "choosing tasks that were too hard or too easy would lead to less than ideal stress levels" (p. 313). Choice has a powerful motivating effect because students are more likely to be engaged in the activity if they believe they have chosen it (Cooper et al., 2008). For example, if a student is able to pick an interest-based reading book, their intrinsic

motivation for reading is more likely going to increase, which would positively affect their reading comprehension (Barbosa et al., 2006). When students make their own decisions, they are also learning the important skill of reflecting on their choices and personal learning, so they can adjust tasks accordingly to meet their needs (Suarez). Students can also be given a wide variety of ways to demonstrate what they know and in a manner they are most comfortable with when taking an assessment (Burke, 2008). Lumsden (2005) studied a classroom with bright colored signs, student work, and manipulatives all over the room that invited exploration, conveyed high expectations, and portrayed the teacher's love for his or her subject matter. Students want and need work that stimulates their curiosity and arouses their desire for deep understanding (Lumsden). Walker (2006) stated the importance of students developing personal bonds with adults that included tailored support and students connecting with the course content so that they see its relationship to real life. Schinke, Cole, and Poulin (2000) showed that student discussions with adults, along with specific other academic/cognitive tasks, were related to higher grades in major subject areas.

Suarez (2007) stated, "tasks that were just challenging enough would make learning interesting but not overwhelming" (p. 61). The students work to reach those goals, and the teacher needs to provide informative feedback along the way (Weller, 2005). Giving positive feedback is successful according to Lumsden (2005), who believed that when grading students' papers, the number right should always be put over the total because it boosts their morale when they recognize how many answers they got correct instead of seeing how many they got wrong.

Bellanca and Forarty (2003) stated the following:

Some learn social skills from informal instruction woven into classroom

> expectations, roles, and guidelines. Others learn better through formal instruction in the skills. Stress the importance for younger rebellious students: Formal instruction in cooperative skills is needed when students' behavior indicated that they lack skills. Formal instruction is especially helpful with younger students and with students who rebel against the cooperative learning climate of high expectations for on-task behavior. These students profit the most from direct instruction, guided practice, and constructive feedback in the development of the cooperative social skills. (p. 71)

Researchers have shown that before and after school tutoring programs improve academic success by helping students with actual class assignments and teaching various strategies that students can generalize to other academic problems (Hock, Pulvers, Deshler, & Schumaker, 2001). Teachers at effective schools make it known that they believe students can do high-level work (Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools [CHCCS], 2011). Many schools have discovered extra-time and extra-help programs work best when teachers assist students in mastering the content standards formerly reserved for the best students. This help often occurred in out-of-school time (CHCCS, 2011). Fulk (2003) referred to a Midwestern school district and how the tutoring was provided by university students majoring in education or curriculum and instruction. This has been extremely well received by students at both levels. Students were either self-nominated or were referred by teachers, parents, or counselors for this extra assistance. Depending on their needs and availability, students worked with tutors daily either during their study halls or lunch periods. Some of the tutors were paid though school improvements grant funds, while other tutors earned academic credit (Fulk). Increasing the capacity of high schools to provide extra help for Grade 9 students to catch up, to learn to read well, and

to earn credits in English and Algebra is critical, as these academic achievements are key predictors of whether students are likely to graduate on time (Quint, 2006).

Attendance

The most powerful predictors of whether a student will complete high school include course performance and attendance during the first year of high school (Allensworth & Easton, 2007). According to Weiss and Bearman (2007), transition effects are not limited to grades alone. According to Neild and Balfanz (2006), the number of absences per student can be monitored very early in the first year of high school. Attendance even in the first few weeks or the first month of the freshman year is related to whether students will eventually graduate. The biggest risk factor for failing Grade 9 is the number of absences during the first 30 days of high school, and failing Grade 9 is one of the most important predictors of dropping out (Neild & Balfanz). Weiss and Bearman (2007) discovered a change in attendance that has been linked to changes in the composition of student peer groups and with the corresponding changes in the climate of high school peer groups. Weiss and Bearman further stated that attendance patterns may split friendships and ties to other students. From this perspective, the negative impact of the transition arises from the broken ties to teachers and other students who typically accompany a change of school. Kemple et al. (2005) found that students with very low Grade 8 test scores who missed 1 week of class are less likely to fail than students with very high test scores who miss just 1 additional week of class. Results showed that students are most likely to drop out during the first 3 months of the calendar year, which indicated that this is a critical time and it "demands a collaborative response across schools to support students" as they make the transition from middle to high school (Hayes, Nelson, Tabin, Pearson, & Worthy, 2002). Information about absences

may be the most practical indicator for identifying students in need of early interventions (Allensworth & Easton, 2007). The 2003 National Survey of Adolescents in the United States found that truancy is a serious concern that affects most of the school districts in the United States (Baker, Sigmon, & Nugent, 2001). Truancy is defined as an unexcused absence, not attending, or showing up late for class and not having a valid reason as defined by the school (American Heritage Dictionary, 2009). Rumberger (2001) found students who are continually absent from school and fall into truant status are more likely to be at risk of dropping out.

Stakeholders

The Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) in Atlanta, Georgia, documented many of the concerns teachers and administrators have about the transition to Grade 9. For example, they found that

- more students fail Grade 9 than any other grade of school;
- among 14 and 15 year olds who struggle with basic reading and mathematics skills, 20% drop out of school within 2 years; and
- a study of 56 Georgia and Florida high schools found that schools with transition programs had significantly lowered failure and dropout rates than those schools that did not offer the programs (Bottoms, 2002).

There is substantial literature (Wheelock & Miao, 2005) that has documented the problems and negative effects of Grade 9 transitions to high school. Some researchers (Legters & Kerr, 2001) have recommended student orientation programs such as summer school programs for students at risk of being retained in Grade 9 or dropping out. Targeted interventions included upper class peer mentors; parental involvement and

education activities; 21st Century workforce skills development; counseling; planning and information-sharing between middle and high schools; activities that prepare students for high-level, rigorous academic coursework; and attendance monitoring (Texas Education Agency [TEA], 2012). Fewer students were retained in the transition grade when middle school students experienced a high school transition program with several diverse articulation activities (Mac Iver, 1990). Mac Iver (1990) wrote that those transition programs which were successful included activities that provided students and parents information about the new school, provided students social support during the transition, and brought middle school and high school personnel together to learn about one another's curriculum requirements.

A Big Sister/Brother program that begins in Grade 8 and continues through Grade 9, a spring social event for current and incoming high school students, and writing programs where Grade 8 students correspond with high school students are just a few ways that transition programs can provide students social support (Mizelle, 2000). The mentoring relationship between a group of individuals can be either formal or informal (Rhodes, Grossman, & Resch, 2000). Cognato (1999) found that students who participated in a number of different interactions, including meetings, letter writing, and a picnic with older students, received fewer failing grades and missed fewer days of school than students who did not participate in such programs (Mizelle & Irvin, 2001). The social interactions in this program included Grade 9 students meeting with Grade 8 students to dispel some of the misconceptions about high school, Grade 8 students shadowing Grade 9 students, and Grade 8 students writing to a Grade 9 student buddy (Mizelle & Irvin, 2001).

Fulk (2003) worked with a district that instituted a 4-week summer orientation

class to prepare selected students for the rigors and expectations of high school. The curriculum included instruction on study skills, organizational skills, making the right decisions, using a school planner or organizer, using the Instructional Media Center, and becoming familiar with their class schedules (Fulk). High school administrators and counselors served as guest speakers. Students earned elective credit upon successful completion of the class. These interventions are of primary importance since they directly target those students who are identified as high risk for failure (Fulk).

Mizelle (2000) explained that some of the ways students can learn about high school include visiting the high school in the spring, perhaps to shadow a high school student; attending a presentation by a high school student or a panel of students; visiting the high school in the fall for schedule information; attending a fall orientation assembly, preferably before school starts; and discussing high school regulations and procedures with Grade 8 teachers and counselors. High school students might, either as a class or club project, set up a web page that would provide incoming students information on different high school activities and clubs and offer them an opportunity to get answers to any questions they may have from the experts (Mizelle). Fulk (2003) explained how one school district implemented the use of student planners. An important step taken at the beginning of the school year was to provide each freshman student with a school handbook and planner during registration. Costs were offset by donations, parent organizations, and the athletic booster club. The planner also included a calendar with all school activities and events listed on the appropriate dates. Students were encouraged to use the calendar to track their assignments and test dates for optimal planning of their studies and projects. Some instructors also provided students with a list of classmates' names and telephone numbers to use as resources when stuck on homework problems

(Fulk).

Mansfield et al. (2007) stated,

> The characteristics that teachers possessed that led their students to have a higher level of motivation were reported to have: (1) gone out of their way to help, (2) provided positive, confidence-building feedback, (3) done unnecessary things to be nice, (4) respected and trusted students and (5) spaced the workload so students did not feel overwhelmed. The researchers also found that students indicated that peers behaved similarly for teachers they like and teachers they dislike, but that effort and quality of work changed. When students like the teacher their effort and quality of work improves. (p. 145)

Wood, Porter, Brady, and Forton (2003) stated, "model the behavior you want to see. From the first day, lay the foundation for a successful year by letting students know what behavior you expect. Modeling classroom routines takes time, but it's time well spent" (p. 1)! Bellanca and Forarty (2003) suggested that "the teacher may model both the correct and the incorrect way to do the task; after the modeling, it is important that the teacher check for understanding" (p. 111). Mather and Goldstein (2001) found that strategies which involve the use of positive reinforcement are generally more effective than punishment. Teachers need to be aware of students' strengths and allow occasions for each student to feel valued, special, and to help others (Mather & Goldstein). These include maintaining eye contact with the child, allowing the child to finish talking, labeling the behavior not the child, and beginning with a verbal positive reinforcement statement (Mather & Goldstein).

Parent Involvement

Middle school students want to know what high school is going to be like

(Mizelle, 1995). They and their parents need to know about and understand high school programs and procedures (Mizelle & Irvin, 2001). Providing students and parents the answers to these and many other questions should be a central component of a high school transition program (Mizelle & Irvin, 2001). In particular, parents need to understand and be actively involved in the decisions their Grade 8 students are asked to make about classes they will take in Grade 9 (Paulson, 1994). Mizelle and Irvin (2001) elaborated that parents need to understand students' options and the long-term effects of the course decisions. When parents are involved in their children's high school experiences, students have higher achievement, are better adjusted, and are less likely to drop out of school (Mizelle, 2000). The longer families stayed involved, the more grades increased, indicating that the effects of parent involvement accrued over time (Jordan, Orozco, & Averett, 2002). More specifically, when parents are involved in education, teens typically have higher GPAs, higher test scores on standardized and classroom assessments, enrollment in more rigorous academic courses, more classes passed, and more credits earned toward graduation (Henderson & Mapp, 2002).

Parent involvement in the transition process to high school can be encouraged through a variety of activities (Mizelle, 2000). Furthermore, Mizelle (2000) stated that parents may be invited to participate in a conference with their child and the high school counselor to discuss course work and schedules, visit the high school with their child in the spring or in the fall, spend a day at the high school to help them understand what their children's lives will be like, and help design and facilitate some of the articulation activities for students. Home-school communication can serve as a safety net to support students, especially those who struggle in school (Christenson & Sheridan, 2001; McCarthey, 2000). Fulk (2003) explained that during evening orientation, middle school

and high school teachers must share concerns as well as relevant student information, instructional strategies, and ideas. Fulk further stated that in addition to an evening orientation, she recommended an additional orientation entitled *step-up days* which are conducted at the high school during the school day. Each of the middle school teams received a 2-hour orientation conducted by successful upper classmen. Students were then divided into smaller groups that allow for questions and a tour of the building.

Mizelle (2000) further elaborated that teachers and administrators can inform parents about transition activities and encourage them to participate. Perhaps more importantly, they can work to keep parents involved in their children's education and school activities during the middle school years so they are comfortable coming to school and confident that their involvement makes a difference in their children's academic success (Mizelle). Parent involvement also affects other aspects of schooling, such as better attendance (Henderson & Mapp, 2002), greater preparedness for classes (Simon, 2004), less disruptive behavior in school (Guttman & Midgley, 2000; Sanders & Herting, 2000), and more positive attitudes toward school (Shumow & Miller, 2001). The parents of many struggling readers are accustomed to receiving only negative communications from school, and upon receiving a positive comment, parents and adolescent students are likely to feel pride which can lead to enhanced connections between home and school and increased engagement for students (Smith & Wilhelm, 2004).

Summary

Research covered several variables that have had an impact on transition difficulties for students as they enter Grade 9. The literature also indicated that African-American and Hispanic students were concentrated in urban schools, which often have a higher poverty rate than rural or suburban schools, and their postsecondary degree

attainment rates lag behind their rural and suburban peers (Orfield, 2004). The literature review included the importance of why providing students with transition programs is essential to their academic growth while entering high school. The literature review also included the negative experiences that students and educators have while students enter into high school.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Overview

The purpose of this project was to analyze the impact of a Grade 9 transition program on student success in the Piedmont area of North Carolina using a quantitative research study. During the end of the 2010-2011 school year, a group of administrators from School X met to discuss the concerns of Grade 9 transition teachers on Grade 9 student transitions to high school. Topics such as high attrition rates, high ratios of student discipline referrals, and lower student academic achievement were discussed. Successful Grade 9 transition programs are built on the foundation of good schooling through Grade 8 (Mental Health in Schools, 2011). The findings of this study will assist administrators in designing the most effective transition programming for their incoming Grade 9 students. Student survey data and teacher survey data were analyzed to explore the impact and convey trends. The emphasis of the study was the Grade 9 transition program and included high school students who were in Grade 9 their first year in an urban high school in the Piedmont region of North Carolina. The study was implemented during the second semester of the 2011-2012 school year.

The quantitative research as defined by John W. Creswell (2009) can be used when the researcher seeks to examine the relationship among variables. Experiments include true experiments, with the random assignment of subjects to treatment conditions and quasi-experiments that use nonrandomized designs (Creswell). This cross-sectional research was designed to explore the impact of interventions on Grade 9 student transitions to high school. The researcher utilized a Superintendent Letter (Appendix A), a Parent/Guardian Consent for Participation Letter (Appendix B), a Child Assent Form (Appendix C), Grade 9 Student Survey Questions (Appendix D), and Grade 9 Teacher

Survey Questions (Appendix E). The researcher then triangulated the data from Grade 9 Student Survey Questions (Appendix D), Grade 9 Teacher Survey Questions (Appendix E), and the English I EOC Exam results to identify themes that emerged from the study.

Research Questions

The purpose of this project was to analyze the impact of a Grade 9 transition program on students in the Piedmont area of North Carolina using a quantitative research study.

1. What is the impact of absenteeism during implementation of the transition program for Grade 9 students during the 2011-2012 school year?

2. What impact does the transition program have on teacher and student perception of student success?

3. How does the transition program improve student performance as measured by the academic indicator of English 1 between Grade 9 students during the 2011-2012 school year implementation of the transition program and Grade 9 students during the 2010-2011 school year prior to the implementation of the transition program?

Participants

The study was comprised of students and teachers at an urban school district located in the Piedmont area of North Carolina. For the purpose of this study, this school district was identified as the Urban School District (USD). The study included teachers and students from School X from courses including English 1, Algebra 1, Earth Environmental Science, World History, and Health and Physical Education. The five courses were offered in 44 sections during the first semester of the 2011-2012 school year including 10 sections of World History, nine sections of English 1, 14 sections of Algebra 1, four sections of Earth Environmental Science, and seven sections of Health and

Physical Education. The 44 sections were taught by 21 certified teachers. The targeted research site had an average class size of approximately 32 students per class. Due to the majority of students enrolling in the listed courses at the research site, the researcher focused on the respective sections. Parent/guardian consent for participation letters (Appendix B) were approved and sent to the residence of first-year Grade 9 students in order to get parental or guardian permission for the students to participate in the study. Also, students who were retained in Grade 9 were excluded from this study. The students enrolled in the respective courses were provided a student survey. The researcher attempted to discover the impact of the interventions on Grade 9 student transitions to high school on a large group of individuals by studying a much smaller group.

Procedures

The researcher requested formal permission using the Superintendent Letter (Appendix A) to conduct this study from the accountability department for the school district through a proposal for conducting research. The researcher explained the purpose of the study and requested permission to conduct research at the targeted school which was granted by the Urban School District's superintendent and the principal of School X. In addition, a proposed timeline was established with the principal that incorporated a starting date and a concluding date for the research study.

The researcher established contact with the school to arrange a time to explain the study to the administrator and to deliver the student and teacher surveys to the participants. The timeline was approved by the Urban School District's superintendent and the principal of School X for research data collection which had an estimated starting date of April 2012 and a conclusion date of June 2012. Dates were secured to conduct these surveys. The 6-week timeframe allowed the researcher to administer the student

surveys and teacher surveys conducted by an independent researcher. Once the data were collected, the process was completed. The researcher analyzed the data and reported the findings in Chapter 4 by August 2012. The completed study, including Chapters 1 through 5, had a projected completion date of December 2012. The researcher compiled the results and analyzed the final conclusion of the study to share with the Urban School District and School X administrators.

The quantitative Grade 9 student survey (Appendix D) and a Grade 9 teacher survey (Appendix E) questions addressed the impact of interventions on students transitioning to Grade 9. Information from this quantitative phase was used to probe significant student survey results by randomly selected students in Grade 9 at the urban high school located in the Piedmont region of North Carolina. The researcher selected a simple random sample for this particular case study. A simple random sample is a group of individuals drawn by a procedure in which all the individuals in the defined population have an equal and independent chance of being selected as a member of the sample (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007). The researcher used random number generators to select the sample population. The researcher obtained a copy of the district census for Grade 9 students from School X who participated in the transition intervention program. Each student who participated in the transition intervention program during the 2011-2012 school year was assigned a number. The researcher used a table of random numbers to draw a sample from the census list.

This study used quantitative research that evaluated the best practices of a high school transition program and its impact on student behavior and attitude. Quantitative research was a dominant methodology that was used to describe and explain features of this reality by collecting numerical data on observable behaviors of samples and by

subjecting these data to statistical analysis (Gall et al., 2007). The quantitative research was to obtain statistical data through student and teacher surveys in correlation with results of the English I EOC exam.

All data analyses for this study were performed with the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software. SPSS is a comprehensive, integrated collection of computer programs for managing, analyzing, and displaying data (Gall et al., 2007). It is used by market researchers, health researchers, survey companies, government, education researchers, and marketing organizations. Once the student surveys had been administered and results collected, the data were entered into statistical software SPSS to calculate three different measures of central tendency (mean, median, and mode) and the standard deviation. The calculations analyzed provided single numerical values that were used to describe the average of the entire set of survey scores. In addition, using the student and teacher responses, the researcher calculated positive response rates, negative response rates, and not applicable/not observed rates. The measures of central tendency constructed single numerical values that were used to describe the entire set of scores. The mean scores represented the average score of an entire set of scores. The mean was joined with the standard deviation which was a measure of scores in a distribution deviating from their mean. The median scores represented the middle point in a distribution of scores, and the mode was the most frequently occurring score in a distribution. The calculation of the central tendencies and the response rates were utilized to draw conclusions about the three research questions. For the purpose of this study, the researcher illustrated the mean score as the closer to 1 the stronger the student participants agreed with the statement; the closer to 5 the stronger the student participants disagreed with the statement. The standard deviation depicts how much variation there

was from the mean.

The researcher analyzed (a) student survey data and (b) teacher survey data by utilizing SPSS statistical software. In addition, the researcher triangulated the data collected from the Grade 9 Student Survey (Appendix D) and Grade 9 Teacher Survey (Appendix E) instruments and English I EOC exam results to identify trends in participant responses from the study. Based on the identified themes, the researcher developed narratives presenting the results of the study. Furthermore, the researcher provided graphical representation of the survey data through SPSS software. Creswell (2009) wrote that triangulating different data sources of information by examining evidence from the sources and using it to build a coherent justification for themes, then converging the results, is a process that adds validity to a study. In addition, triangulation is an essential and necessary element within a study that can help eliminate researcher bias (Gall et al., 2007).

Instruments

The instrument that was used by the researcher to collect data from School X participants consisted of a Grade 9 student survey (Appendix D) and a Grade 9 teacher survey (Appendix E). The purpose of a survey interview is to supplement data that have been collected by other methods. Margaret LeCompte, Judith Preissle, and Renata Tesch listed one type of survey interview called Projective technique (Gall et al., 2007). Projective techniques present ambiguous stimuli to elicit subconscious perceptions that would be difficult to observe in a natural setting or solicit through regular interviewing (Gall et al., 2007). A survey is a method of data collection using questionnaires or interviews to collect data from a sample that has been selected to represent a population to which the findings of the data analysis can be generalized (Gall et al., 2007). The two

data collecting instruments were directly related to the study purpose and research questions and analyzed the impact of interventions on students transitioning to Grade 9 by utilizing statistical quantitative data and themed narrative qualitative data. The researcher compared the participant survey results to determine if their responses had the same response for topics of academics, attendance, stakeholder perception, and parental involvement.

The Grade 9 teacher survey (Appendix D) and Grade 9 student survey (Appendix E), were administered during their homeroom period 3 weeks before the end of the fourth quarter. The survey was not a disruption to the instructional period for the teachers or the daily routine of the students being surveyed. The study included student and teacher surveys using the Likert scale with readable instructions to guide the subject. The student survey was developed based on the purpose of the study and research questions by targeting the exploration of the intervention program's impact on student transitioning to Grade 9 as it pertained to the beliefs that (a) students are motivated to complete their school assignments, (b) students are motivated to attend school, (c) teachers care about their students, (d) students care about their education, and (e) parents are involved with their student's education. The students were asked to respond to a 5-point Likert scale survey and then answer a final open-ended question. The 5-point scale survey answers were ranked as follows: SA = strongly agree, A = agree, D = disagree, SD = strongly disagree, NA = not applicable or no opinion. In order to establish content validity, each survey item was directly linked to expert opinion found with the review of pertinent literature. A pilot test was administered in order to check its reliability and validity (Gall et al., 2007). Appropriate pilot testing procedures were implemented to check content validity and reliability of each assessment tool. According to Creswell (2009), content

validity refers to whether or not the questions on an instrument measured the content they were intended to measure. Reliability was the extent to which another researcher could duplicate the study in a similar setting and reach similar results.

Table 13 identified the literature that was supported by experts and served to validate the survey statements and lend content validity. The researcher-created survey was administered to a smaller sample size within the participating pool of respondents, and then the results were analyzed to check content validity. To establish validity, each survey was directly matched to expert views found in the review of literature. In addition, six educational experts reviewed the survey instrument and provided feedback to the researcher to further establish validity. The six educational experts included the high school director, a principal with 24 years of experience in education, and four Grade 9 teachers from each core academic area, with a combined 46 years of teaching experience.

Table 13

Content Validity of Items in Grade 9 Student and Teacher Survey

Topic	Item Number	Justification in Literature
	Content Validity of Items in Grade 9 Student Survey	
Academics	1, 3, 7, 8, 14, 15 & 16	Bottoms, 2002; Deshler, Schumaker, Lenz, Bulgren, Hock & Knight, 2001; Jerald, 2006; Kemple, Herlihy & Smith, 2005; Potter, Schliskey, Stevenson & Drawdy, 2001; Weiss & Bearman, 2007
Attendance	4, 5 & 6	Allensworth & Easton, 2007; American Heritage Dictionary, 2009; Baker, Sigmon & Nugent, 2001; Kemple, Herlihy & Smith, 2005; Neild & Balfanz, 2006; Rumberger, 2001; Weiss & Bearman, 2007
Stakeholder Perception	13 & 17	Anderman & Kaplan, 2008; Bartholomew, 2008; Bellanca & Forarty, 2003; Burke, 2008; Brewster & Fager, 2000; Mansfeld & Montalvo, 2007; Phillip & Lindsay, 2006; Ryan, 2001
Parental Involvement	2, 9, 10, 11 & 12	Guttman & Midgley, 2000; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Jordan, Orozco & Averett, 2002; Mizelle, 1995; Mizelle, 2000; Mizelle & Irvin, 2001; Sanders & Herting, 2000; Shumow & Miller, 2001; Smith & Wilholm, 2004; Paulson, 1994
	Content Validity of Items in Grade 9 Teacher Survey	
Academics	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 9 & 14	Bottoms, 2002; Deshler, Schumaker, Lenz, Bulgren, Hock & Knight, 2001; Jerald, 2006; Kemple, Herlihy & Smith, 2005; Potter, Schliskey, Stevenson & Drawdy, 2001; Weiss & Bearman, 2007
Attendance	6, 7, 8, 9 & 10	Allensworth & Easton, 2007; American Heritage Dictionary, 2009; Baker, Sigmon & Nugent, 2001; Kemple, Herlihy & Smith, 2005; Neild & Balfanz, 2006; Rumberger, 2001; Weiss & Bearman, 2007
Stakeholder Perception	11, 12, 13 & 15	Anderman & Kaplan, 2008; Bartholomew, 2008; Bellanca & Forarty, 2003; Burke, 2008; Brewster & Fager, 2000; Mansfeld, Miller, & Montalvo, 2007; Phillip & Lindsay, 2006; Ryan, 2001
Parental Involvement	16, 17, 18, 19 & 20	Guttman & Midgley, 2000; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Jordan, Orozco & Averett, 2002; Mizelle, 1995; Mizelle, 2000; Mizelle & Irvin, 2001; Sanders & Herting, 2000; Shumow & Miller, 2001; Smith & Wilholm, 2004; Paulson, 1994

The teacher survey was developed based on the purpose of the study and research

questions by targeting the exploration of the intervention program's impact on students transitioning to Grade 9 as it pertained to (a) teacher perception, (b) academic performance, (c) parent involvement, and (d) attendance. The teachers were asked to respond to a 5-point Likert scale survey. The 5-point scale survey answers were ranked as follows: SA = strongly agree, A = agree, D = disagree, SD = strongly disagree, NA = not applicable or no opinion.

The results were tabulated using the SPSS program to calculate the central tendency of the participant responses. External validity was established by a set number of Grade 9 students allowed to take the survey. The only students who were able to participate in the survey were first-year Grade 9 students. Internal validity was established by making sure that all of the data used in the study were pooled from students who were first-year Grade 9 students for that school year. The student services department maintained a list of first-year Grade 9 students to be surveyed so that there would not be any mistakes of presenting a survey to a Grade 9 student who was retained from the previous school years. This study required one researcher, and there was no cost to the school district or Gardner Webb University. Once the school district approved the proposal, the researcher became responsible for establishing communication with the building principal and points of contact in the school to facilitate the completion of surveys, interviews, and observations.

Limitations

This study examined one high school that currently has a transition program in place. Interviews only reflect what the respondents chose to reveal to the administrators. Other variables affecting student behavior and attitude, such as parental education, class size, principal, and teacher degree status, were not considered.

Delimitations

This research was a quantitative design in the form of cross-sectional research examining one public high school in North Carolina, the students they serve, and the staff and faculty employed.

Chapter 4: Results

Overview

The purpose of this project was to analyze the impact of a Grade 9 transition program on students in the Piedmont area of North Carolina using a quantitative research study. The primary focus of the study was the transition program that included Grade 9 students and Grade 9 teachers from School X, an urban high school in the Piedmont region of North Carolina. The five courses that were associated with the subjects included English 1, Algebra 1, Earth Environmental Science, World History, and Health and Physical Education. The five courses were offered in 44 sections during the first semester of the 2011-2012 school year, including 10 sections of World History, nine sections of English 1, 14 sections of Algebra 1, four sections of Earth Environmental Science, and seven sections of Health and Physical Education. The 44 sections were taught by 21 certified teachers. The targeted research site had an average class size of approximately 32 students per class.

Once the student surveys had been administered and the results were collected, the data were entered into statistical software SPSS to calculate three different measures of central tendency and the standard deviation. The mean, median, mode, and standard deviation were analyzed to provide single numerical values that were used to describe the average of the entire set of survey scores. In addition, the researcher calculated positive response rates, negative response rates, and not applicable response rates from the student respondents. The numerical data produced by SPSS was utilized to establish statistical themes in order to produce narratives.

The researcher utilized the student and teacher surveys along with the English I EOC exams results to collect the data. The researcher then triangulated the data from all

sources to identify themes that emerged from the study. Based on the identified themes, the researcher developed narratives presenting the results of the study.

Research Questions

The purpose of this project was to analyze the impact of a Grade 9 transition program on students in the Piedmont area of North Carolina using a quantitative research study. The following questions were investigated during the research process:

1. What is the impact of absenteeism on Grade 9 students during the 2011-2012 school year during implementation of the transition program?

2. What impact did the transition program have on teacher and student perception of student success?

3. How does the transition program improve student performance as measured by the academic indicator of English 1, between Grade 9 students during the 2011-2012 school year implementation of the transition program and Grade 9 students during the 2010-2011 school year prior to the implementation of the transition program?

The Likert scale Grade 9 Student Survey (Appendix D) and Grade 9 Teacher Survey (Appendix E) were designed to measure the attitudes and beliefs of a given statement based on the degree to which a participant agrees, disagrees, or believes it is not applicable. The survey answers were ranked as follows: SA = strongly agree, A = agree, D = disagree, SD = strongly disagree, NA = not applicable or not observed. The survey was aligned with the research questions in order to draw conclusions for the study; in addition, survey results were converted to numerical values to provide quantitative data for the purpose of producing trends and themes for narrative analysis.

In order to produce the mean, median, mode, and standard deviation, the Likert scale values were assigned to the numeric 5-point scale accordingly: 1 = strongly agree, 2

= agree, 3 = not applicable or not observed, 4 = disagree, and 5 = strongly disagree. Once the numeric values were assigned, the computer software SPSS was utilized to calculate the measures of central tendency, mean, median, mode, and standard deviation. The measures of central tendency provided single numerical values that were used to describe the average of the entire set of scores. In addition, the researcher calculated positive response rates, negative response rates, and not applicable response rates from the student respondents. The mean scores represented the average score of an entire set of scores. The mean was coupled with the standard deviation which was measurement of the extent to which scores in a distribution deviate from their mean. In addition, the median score represented the middle point in a distribution of scores, and the mode was the most frequently occurring score in a distribution. The calculated central tendencies were utilized to draw conclusions about the study's research questions.

The Grade 9 student survey questions 18 and 19 represented in Table 14 show gender and ethnic membership pertaining to the student participants involved in this study. The survey was administered to eight Algebra I classes in the math department at School X. Table 14 represents a total of 219 simple random sample students who participated in the survey component of the study; 109 students were female and 110 students were male. The table includes percentage data of each subgroup's participation in questions 18 and 19.

Table 14

Grade 9 Student Survey Questions 18 and 19: Gender verses Ethnic Membership

	White	Black	Hispanic	American Indian	Asian	Multi Race
			Students (N = 219)			
Male	69	16	10	1	5	9
	31.5%	7.3%	4.6%	0.5%	2.3%	4.1%
Female	62	22	25	-	-	-
	28.3%	10.0%	6.8%	-	-	-
Total	131	38	35	1	5	9
	59.8%	17.4%	15.98%	0.5%	2.3%	4.1%

Note. Dash indicates that data were not obtained or not reported.

Results from Research Question 1

What is the impact of absenteeism between Grade 9 students during the 2011-2012 school year implementation of the transition program and Grade 9 students during the 2010-2011 school year prior to the implementation of the transition program? The focus of Research Question 1 was whether teachers thought positively or negatively on the program's impact on absenteeism of Grade 9 students. The mean score represented the arithmetic average score of an entire set of scores. The mean was coupled with the standard deviation which is a measure of the extent to which scores in a distribution deviate from their mean. In addition, the median score represented the middle point in a distribution of scores and the mode that is the most frequently occurring score in a distribution. The calculated central tendencies were utilized to draw conclusions about the study's research questions. Research Question 1 was directly answered through teacher survey questions 6, 7, 8, and 10. Student survey questions 5 and 6 also answered Research Question 1. Table 15 provides response data from the teacher participants encompassing Grade 9 teacher survey question 6. Table 16 provides response data from

the teacher participants encompassing Grade 9 teacher survey question 8. Teacher survey questions 6 and 8 were independent questions designed to measure the attitudes and beliefs of teachers about their feelings towards the Grade 9 transition program.

Table 15 represents question 6 of the teacher survey which states, "Teachers have a voice in planning and implementing Grade 9 intervention programs that affect student attendance." Table 15 also includes representative response rates from participants using the Likert scale score. The participants responded at a rate of 73.3% in which they either strongly agreed or agreed to survey question 6; whereas, there was a 20% negative response rate for participants who strongly disagreed. The overall remaining 6.7% responded was "not applicable" to the survey question. The mean score measured at 2.47 showed that participants selected that they agreed with survey question 6. The mode for this survey question had a score of 2 which is a close relationship with the mean score. The median score of 2 showed that over 50% of those who participated selected that they at least agreed to survey question 6. The bell curve of question 6 data had a positively skewed distribution. The skewed distribution determined that participants selected gave positive response rates above the median and mode of the central tendency. The results from the data produced a standard deviation of 1.41. Sixty-eight percent of participants selected were within one standard deviation of the mean. The range between one standard deviation of the mean consisted of 1.06-3.88.

Table 15

Grade 9 Teacher Survey Question 6: Teachers Have a Voice in Planning and Implementing Grade 9 Intervention Programs that Affect Student Attendance

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Applicable	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
		Teachers	(N=15)		
Q6	3	8	1	-	3
Percent	20.0%	53.3%	6.7%	-	20.0%

Note. Dash indicates that data were not obtained or not reported. Mean = 2.47, Median = 2, Mode = 2, Standard Deviation = 1.41.

Teacher survey question 8 produced the results in Table 16 that stated, "Projects covering academic content enhance Grade 9 students' motivation to attend school." Table 16 reports a 53.3% positive response rate, a negative response rate of 20.0%, with the remaining rate of 26.7% not applicable. The mean score was 2.07 which closely approached the Likert scale score of 2 which means that participants agreed with question 8, and the standard deviation had a rate of .79. Sixty-eight percent of responses were within one standard deviation of the mean. The range between one standard deviation of the mean coincided along 1.28-2.86. The median and mode of the survey question was 2. The median score represented that over 50% of participants selected a positive rate for question 8 of the survey. The mode score of 2 interpreted that participants selected "agreed" as the answer to survey question 8.

Table 16

Grade 9 Teacher Survey Question 8: Projects Covering Academic Content Enhance Grade 9 Student Motivation to Attend School

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Applicable	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
		Teachers	(N=15)		
Q8	-	8	4	-	3
Percent	-	53.3%	26.7%	-	20.0%

Note. Dash indicates that data were not obtained or not reported. Mean = 2.07, Median = 2, Mode = 2, Standard Deviation = 0.79.

Teacher survey questions 7 and 10 were independent questions designed to measure the attitudes and beliefs of teachers about their feelings toward the Grade 9 transition program. Table 17 provides response data from the participants encompassing Grade 9 teacher survey question 7. Table 18 provides response data from the teacher participants encompassing Grade 9 teacher survey question 10. Table 17 reports 93.3% of teachers responded positively to survey question 7, whereas there were 0% who responded "not applicable." There was a 6.7% negative response rate. Participants of this survey question had a mean score of 1.80 which lies between the Likert scale score of 1 and 2.

The results show that participants agreed with question 7 of the teacher survey. The median and mode scores of the survey showed that the majority of participants selected 2 for their answer. The results from the data produced a standard deviation of 1.01. Sixty-eight percent of participants selected within one standard deviation of the mean. The range between one standard deviation of the mean consisted of .79-2.81. The bell curve of question 7 data had a positively skewed distribution. The skewed distribution determined that participants selected that positive response rates above the

median and mode of the central tendency.

Table 17

Grade 9 Teacher Survey Question 7: My School Funds the Transition Program in Order to Reduce Grade 9 Student Absenteeism

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Applicable	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
		Teachers	(N=15)		
Q7	6	8	-	-	1
Percent	40%	53.3%	-	-	6.7%

Note. Dash indicates that data were not obtained or not reported. Mean = 1.80, Median = 2, Mode = 2, Standard Deviation = 1.01.

Teacher survey question 10 in Table 18 reports an 86.7% positive response rate. The mean score was 2.06 which was the average answer selected by participants pertaining to the survey. Due to the close relationship of the mean, the results show that 86.7% of participants "agreed" with question 10. Furthermore, the remaining 13.3% showed a negative response rate. The median data represented that 50% of participants selected "agreed" as a positive response for the survey. The mode was 2 which demonstrated that a majority of participants selected that they agreed with the survey question. The bell curve of question 10 data had a positively skewed distribution. The skewed distribution determined that participants selected gave positive responses rates above the median and mode of the central tendency. The results from the data produced a standard deviation of 0.59. Sixty-eight percent of participants selected within one standard deviation of the mean. The range between one standard deviation of the mean consisted of 1.47-2.65.

Table 18

Grade 9 Teacher Survey Question 10: My Administrative Staff has Effective Measures that are in Place to Reduce Grade 9 Student Absenteeism

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Applicable	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
		Teachers	(N=15)		
Q10	1	12	-	2	-
Percent	6.7%	80.0%	-	13.3%	-

Note. Dash indicates that data were not obtained or not reported. Mean = 2.06, Median = 2, Mode = 2, Standard Deviation = 0.59.

Student survey questions 5 and 6 were independent questions designed to measure the attitudes and beliefs of students about their feelings toward the Grade 9 Transition Program. Table 19 provides response data from student participants encompassing Grade 9 student survey question 5. Table 20 provides response data from student participants encompassing Grade 9 student survey question 6. The mean score represented the arithmetic average score of an entire set of scores. In Table 19, 65.7% of students responded positively to survey question 5; whereas, the negative response rate was 28.4%. There was an overall remaining 5.9% who responded "not applicable." The mean score of student survey question 5 measured 2.68 which lies in close correlation to the Likert scale score 2 of agree. The median results show that over 50% of participants selected a response rate of positive about question 5. The mode results demonstrated that the majority of participants selected "agreed" as an answer of choice. The results from the data created a standard deviation of .31. The student participants at 68% had chosen within one standard deviation of the mean. The range between one standard deviation of the mean coincided along 2.37-2.99.

Table 19

Grade 9 Student Survey Question 5: When I am Absent from School My Teachers Provide an Opportunity for Me to Complete My Missing Assignments Within Five (5) School Days

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Applicable/	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
		Students	(N=219)		
Q5	41	103	13	8	54
Percent	18.7%	47.0%	5.9%	3.7%	24.7%

Note. Mean = 2.68, Median = 2, Mode = 2, Standard Deviation = 0.31.

Student survey question 6 in Table 20 reports a 74.4% positive response rate which coincided with the mean score of 2.52. The result displayed that participants selected that they agreed with the survey question. Students who missed 27 days or less have an 85% attendance rate during that set school year. The 74.4% positive rate defined that students were present at school 85% of the time or greater during the set school year. The negative response rate was 22.0% with the remaining rate for "not applicable" with an overall 3.7%. The results from the data created a standard deviation of 0.31. The range between one standard deviation of the mean coincided along 2.68-2.83. The median and mode of the survey question was 2. The median score represented that over 50% of participants selected a positive rate for question 6 of the survey. The mode score of 2 interpreted that participants selected "agreed" with the answer to survey question 6.

Table 20

Grade 9 Student Survey Question 6: I Have Been Absent from School No More Than 27 during the 2011-2012 School Year

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Applicable	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
		Students	(N=219)		
Q6	30	133	8	8	40
Percent	13.7%	60.7%	3.7%	3.7%	18.3%

Note. Mean = 2.52, Median = 2, Mode = 2, Standard Deviation = 0.31.

Table 21 presents the surveys for male and female students in Grade 9 that are aligned with Research Question 1. The table includes 110 male student responses to the survey including raw scores and percentages. The responses for student survey questions 4, 5, and 6 had positive rates of strongly agree and agree of 63.3%, 66.0% and 76.2%. Student survey question 4 had a negative response rate of 31.2%. The table also includes 109 female student responses to the survey including raw scores and percentages. Student survey question 5 had the highest negative response rate of 26.6%.

Table 21

Research Question 1 Grade 9 Student Survey: Male and Female Student Analysis

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Applicable	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
		Male Students	(N=110)		
Independent Questions					
Q4	19.1%(21)	43.6%(48)	6.4%(7)	9.1%(10)	21.8%(24)
Q5	16.4%(18)	49.1%(54)	4.5%(5)	5.5%(6)	24.5%(27)
Q6	14.5%(16)	60.9%(67)	3.6%(4)	4.5%(5)	16.4%(18)
		Female Students	(N=109)		
Independent Questions					
Q4	14.7%(16)	59.6%(65)	4.6%(5)	8.3%(9)	12.8%(14)
Q5	21.1%(23)	45.0%(49)	7.3%(8)	1.8%(2)	24.8%(27)
Q6	12.8%(14)	60.6%(66)	4.6%(5)	2.8%(3)	19.3%(21)

Note. Research Question 1: What is the impact of absenteeism on Grade 9 students during the 2011-2012 school year during implementation of the transition program?

Results from Research Question 2

What impact does the transition program have on teacher and student perception of student success? The focus of Research Question 2 was the perception of students, whether positive or negative, on the impact of Grade 9 students. The mean score represented the arithmetic average score of an entire set of scores. The mean was coupled with the standard deviation which is a measure of the extent to which scores in a distribution deviate from their mean. In addition, the median score represented the middle point in a distribution of scores and the mode is the most frequently occurring score in a distribution. The calculated central tendencies were utilized to draw conclusions about the study's research questions to determine if the participant responses were similar to their peers. Research Question 2 is directly answered through teacher survey questions 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 18, 19, and 20. Student survey questions 9, 10, 11,

12, 13, and 17 provided answers to Research Question 2. Tables, in addition to narratives, provide a systematic presentation of results.

Table 22 provides response data from the student participants encompassing Grade 9 student survey question 13. Table 23 provides response data from the student participants encompassing Grade 9 student survey question 17. Student survey questions 13 and 17 were independent questions designed to measure the attitudes and beliefs of students about their feelings toward the Grade 9 Transition Program.

Table 22 reports that 60.3% of students responded positively to survey question 13, whereas there was a 30.6% negative response rate. The overall remaining 9.1% responded "not applicable." The bell curve of question 13 data had a positively skewed distribution. The skewed distribution determined that participants selected a positive response rate above the median and mode of the central tendency. The results from the data produced a standard deviation of 0.24. Sixty-eight percent of participants selected within one standard deviation of the mean. The range between one standard deviation of the mean consisted of 2.53-3.01. The mean score of student surveys measured 2.77 which exhibited that the majority of students agreed with survey question 13. The median score of 2 denoted that over 50% of participants agreed with the survey question. The mode score of 2 defined that participants elected to agree with question 13.

Table 22

Grade 9 Student Survey Question 13: My Teachers are Concerned with My Success and How I Do with My Academic Grades

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Applicable	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
		Students	(N=219)		
Q13	24	108	20	29	38
Percent	11.0%	49.3%	9.1%	13.2%	17.4%

Note. Mean = 2.77, Median = 2, Mode = 2, Standard Deviation = 0.24.

Student survey question 17 in Table 23 reported a 64.4% positive response rate. The negative response rate was 22.4% with the remaining rate for not applicable with an overall 13.2%. The mean score of student survey question 17 measured 2.55 which showed that the majority of students agreed with survey question 17. The results from the data created a standard deviation of 0.28. Sixty-eight percent of participants chose within one standard deviation of the mean. The range between one standard deviation of the mean coincided along 2.27-2.83. The median and mode of the survey question was 2. The median score represented that over 50% of participants selected a positive rate for question 17 of the survey. The mode score of 2 interpreted that participants selected "agreed" with the answer to survey question 17.

Table 23

Grade 9 Student Survey Question 17: My Teachers Give Me Positive Feedback About My Assignments

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Applicable	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
		Students	(N=219)		
Q17	42	99	29	14	35
Percent	19.2%	45.2%	13.2%	6.4%	16.0%

Note. Mean = 2.55, Median = 2, Mode = 2, Standard Deviation = 0.28.

Table 24 provides response data from the student participants encompassing Grade 9 student survey question 10. Table 25 provides response data from the student participants encompassing Grade 9 student survey question 11. Student survey questions 10 and 11 were independent questions designed to measure the attitudes and beliefs of students about their feelings toward the Grade 9 Transition Program. In Table 24, 60.3% of students responded positively to survey question 10, whereas there was a 30.6% negative response rate with the overall remaining 9.1% responded "not applicable." The mean score of student survey question 10 measured 2.76 which exhibited that the majority of students agreed with survey question 10. The median score of 2 characterized that over 50% participants agreed with the survey question. The mode score of 2 denoted that participants agreed with question 10. The bell curve of question 10 data had a positively skewed distribution. The skewed distribution determined that participants selected positive response rates above the median and mode of the central tendency. The results from the data produced a standard deviation of 0.30. Sixty-eight percent of participants selected within one standard deviation of the mean. The range between one standard deviation of the mean consisted of 2.46-3.06.

Table 24

Grade 9 Student Survey Question 10: My Parent(s) or Guardian(s) Speak to Me About Making Better Decision Concerning My Behavior While At School During the 2011-2012 School Year

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Applicable	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
		Students	(N=219)		
Q10	37	82	38	21	41
Percent	16.9%	37.4%	17.4%	9.6%	18.7%

Note. Mean = 2.76, Median = 2, Mode = 2, Standard Deviation = 0.30.

Student survey question 11 in Table 25 reports a 54.4% positive response rate. The negative response rate was 35.2% with the remaining rate for "not applicable" with an overall 10.5%. The results from the data created a standard deviation of 0.34. Sixty-eight percent of participants chose within one standard deviation of the mean. The mean score of student survey question 11 measured 2.83 which displayed that the majority of students agreed with survey question 11. The range between one standard deviation of the mean coincided along 2.49-3.17. The median and mode of the survey question was 2. The median score represented that over 50% of participants selected a positive rate for question 11 of the survey. The mode score of 2 interpreted that participants selected "agreed" on the answer to survey question 11.

Table 25

Grade 9 Student Survey Question 11: My Parent(s) or Guardian(s) are Informed of My Suspensions by My Administrators during the 2011-2012 School Year.

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Applicable	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
		Students	(N=219)		
Q11	33	86	23	39	38
Percent	15.1%	39.3%	10.5%	17.8%	17.4%

Note. Mean = 2.83, Median = 2, Mode = 2, Standard Deviation = 0.34.

Table 26 provides response data from the student participants encompassing Grade 9 student survey question 9. Table 27 provides response data from the student participants encompassing Grade 9 student survey question 12. Student survey questions 9 and 12 were independent questions designed to measure the attitudes and beliefs of students about their feelings toward the Grade 9 Transition Program. Table 26 represents 59.8% of students responded positively to survey question 9, whereas there was a 28.3% negative response rate. The overall remaining 11.9% responded "not applicable." The mean score of student survey question 9 measured 2.62 which exhibited that the majority of students agreed with survey question 9. The median score of 2 described that over 50% participants agreed with the survey question. The mode score of 2 was decided that participants had favored to agree with question 9. The bell curve of question 9 data had a positively skewed distribution. The skewed distribution determined that participants selected positive responses rate above the median and mode of the central tendency. The results from the data produced a standard deviation of 0.36. Sixty-eight percent of participants selected within one standard deviation of the mean. The range between one standard deviation of the mean consisted of 2.26-2.98.

Table 26

Grade 9 Student Survey Question 9: My Parent(s) or Guardian(s) Communicates with My Teachers Concerning My Academic Grades

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Applicable	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
		Students	(N=219)		
Q9	46	85	26	30	32
Percent	21.0%	38.8%	11.9%	13.7%	14.6%

Note. Mean = 2.62, Median = 2, Mode = 2, Standard Deviation = 0.36.

Student survey question 12 in Table 27 reported a 52.9% positive response rate. The negative response rate was 32.5% with the remaining rate for "not applicable" an overall 14.6%. The results from the data created a standard deviation of 0.37 with 68% of participants chosen being within one standard deviation of the mean. The mean score of student survey question 12 measured 2.85 which displayed that the majority of students agreed with survey question 12. The range between one standard deviation of the mean coincided along 2.48-3.22. The median and mode of the survey question was 2. The median score represented that over 50% of participants selected a positive rate for question 12 of the survey. The mode score of 2 interpreted that participants selected "agreed" to answer survey question 12.

Table 27

Grade 9 Student Survey Question 12: My Mentor Has Made Contact with My Parent(s) or Guardian(s) Concerning My Academics

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Applicable	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
		Students	(N=219)		
Q12	34	82	32	24	47
Percent	15.5%	37.4%	14.6%	11.0%	21.5%

Note. Mean = 2.85, Median = 2, Mode = 2, Standard Deviation = 0.37.

Table 28 provides response data from the teacher participants encompassing Grade 9 teacher survey question 18. Table 29 provides response data from the teacher participants encompassing Grade 9 teacher survey question 20. Teacher survey questions 18 and 20 were independent questions designed to measure the attitudes and beliefs of teachers about their feelings toward the Grade 9 Transition Program.

Table 28 reports 100.0% of teachers responded positively to survey question 6, whereas there was a 0% for both the "not applicable" and negative response rate. The mean score of teacher survey question 18 measured 1.47 which demonstrated that the majority of participants agreed with survey question 18. The bell curve of question 18 data had a positively skewed distribution. The skewed distribution determined that participants selected positive response rates that were above the median and mode of the central tendency. The results from the data produced a standard deviation of 0.50. Sixty-eight percent of participants selected within one standard deviation of the mean. The range between one standard deviation of the mean consisted of 0.97-1.97. The median score of 1 characterized that over 50% participants agreed with the survey question. The mode score of 1 meant that participants had chosen to agree with question 18.

Table 28

Grade 9 Teacher Survey Question 18: Parents Respond Back to Teacher Contacts (by phone or email) Within Twenty-Four (24) Hours of Communication Dealing with Student Academics

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Applicable	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
		Teachers	(N=15)		
Q18	8	7	-	-	-
Percent	53.3%	46.7%	-	-	-

Note. Dash indicates that data were not obtained or not reported. Mean = 1.47, Median = 1, Mode = 1, Standard Deviation = 0.50.

Teacher survey question 20 in Table 29 reports a 53.3% positive response rate. The negative response rate was 40.0% with the remaining rate for "not applicable" being an overall 6.7%. The results from the data created a standard deviation of 1.20. Sixty-eight percent of participants chose within one standard deviation of the mean. The mean score of survey question 20 measured 3.07 which displayed that the majority of participants agreed with survey question 20. The range between one standard deviation of the mean coincided along 1.87-4.27. The median score of 2 represented that over 50% of participants selected a positive rate for question 20 of the survey. The mode score of 5 interpreted that participants selected "agreed" as the answer to survey question 20.

Table 29

Grade 9 Teacher Survey Question 18: Parents Respond Back to Teacher Contacts (by phone or email) Within Twenty-Four (24) Hours of Communication Dealing with Student Behaviors

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Applicable	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
		Teachers	(N=15)		
Q20	3	5	1	-	6
Percent	20.0%	33.3%	6.7%	-	40.0%

Note. Dash indicates that data were not obtained or not reported. Mean = 3.07, Median = 2, Mode = 5, Standard Deviation = 1.20.

Table 30 provides response data from the teacher participants encompassing Grade 9 teacher survey question 12. Table 31 provides response data from the teacher participants encompassing Grade 9 teacher survey question 15. Teacher survey questions 12 and 15 were independent questions designed to measure the attitudes and beliefs of teachers about their feelings toward the Grade 9 Transition Program.

Table 30 reported 60.0% of teachers responded positively to survey question 12, whereas there was no response rate for "not applicable"; the remaining rate for the negative response rate was an overall 40.0%. The bell curve of question 12 data had a positively skewed distribution. The skewed distribution determined that participants selected positive response rates that were above the median and mode of the central tendency. The results from the data produced a standard deviation of 0.98. Sixty-eight percent of participants selected were within one standard deviation of the mean. The mean score of teacher survey question 12 measured 3.20 which exhibited that the majority of participants agreed with survey question 12. The range between one standard deviation of the mean consisted of 2.22-4.18. The median score of 2 portrayed that over 50% participants agreed with the survey question. The mode score of 2 spelled that

participants had chosen to agree with question 12.

Table 30

Grade 9 Teacher Survey Question 12: My Students Care About Learning and Getting Good Grades.

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Applicable	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
		Teachers	(N=15)		
Q12	-	9	-	-	6
Percent	-	60.0%	-	-	40.0%

Note. Dash indicates that data were not obtained or not reported. Mean = 3.20, Median = 2, Mode = 2, Standard Deviation = 0.98.

Teacher survey question 15 in Table 31 reports a 40.0% positive response rate. The negative response rate was 60.0% and no response rate for "not applicable." The mean score of teacher survey question 15 measured 3.67 which demonstrated that the majority of participants disagreed with survey question 15. The results from the data created a standard deviation of 1.17. Sixty-eight percent of participants had chosen within one standard deviation of the mean. The range between one standard deviation of the mean coincided along 2.50-4.84. The median and mode of the survey question was 5. The median score represented that over 50% of participants selected a negative rate for question 20 of the survey. The mode score of 5 interpreted that participants selected "disagreed" to the answer to survey question 15.

Table 31

Grade 9 Teacher Survey Question 15: My Students Come to Class Organized and Prepared for Learning

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Applicable	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
		Teachers	(N=15)		
Q15	1	5	-	1	8
Percent	6.7%	33.3%	-	6.7%	53.3%

Note. Dash indicates that data were not obtained or not reported. Mean = 3.67, Median = 5, Mode = 5, Standard Deviation = 1.17.

Table 32 provides response data from the teacher participants encompassing Grade 9 teacher survey question 11. Table 33 provides response data from the teacher participants encompassing Grade 9 teacher survey question 13. Teacher survey questions 11 and 13 were independent questions designed to measure the attitudes and beliefs of teachers about their feelings toward the Grade 9 Transition Program. Table 32 shows 86.7% of teachers responded positively to survey question 11, whereas there was a 0.0% response rate for "not applicable"; the remaining rate for the negative response rate was an overall 13.4%. The mean score of teacher survey question 11 measured 2.27 which showed that the majority of participants agreed with survey question 11. The median score of 2 represented that over 50% of the participants agreed with the survey question. The mode score of 2 denoted that participants had preferred to agree with question 11. The bell curve of question 11 data had a positively skewed distribution that determined participants selected positive response rates above the median and mode of the central tendency. The results from the data produced a standard deviation of 0.93. Sixty-eight percent of participants selected within one standard deviation of the mean. The range between one standard deviation of the mean consisted of 1.34-3.20.

Table 32

Grade 9 Teacher Survey Question 11: My Students Attend School at Least 85% of the School Year

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Applicable	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
		Teachers	(N=15)		
Q11	1	12	-	1	1
Percent	6.7%	80.0%	-	6.7%	6.7%

Note. Dash indicates that data were not obtained or not reported. Mean = 2.27, Median = 2, Mode = 2, Standard Deviation = 0.93.

Teacher survey question 13 in Table 33 reported an 80.0% positive response rate. The negative response rate was 20.0% with the remaining rate for "not applicable" being an overall 0.0%. The mean score of teacher survey question 13 measured 2.60 which demonstrated that the majority of participants agreed with survey question 13. The results from the data created a standard deviation of 0.80. Sixty-eight percent of participants had chosen within one standard deviation of the mean. The range between one standard deviation of the mean coincided along 1.80-3.40. The median and mode of the survey question was 2. The median score represented that over 50% of participants selected a positive rate for question 13 of the survey. The mode score of 2 interpreted that participants selected "agreed" on the answer to survey question 15.

Table 33

Grade 9 Teacher Survey Question 13: My Students Enjoy Being at School during the 2011-2012 School Years

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Applicable	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
		Teachers	(N=15)		
Q13	-	12	-	-	3
Percent	-	80.0%	-	-	20.0%

Note. Dash indicates that data were not obtained or not reported. Mean = 2.60, Median = 2, Mode = 2, Standard Deviation = 0.80.

Table 34 provides response data from the teacher participants encompassing Grade 9 teacher survey question 16. Table 35 provides response data from the teacher participants encompassing Grade 9 teacher survey question 19. Teacher survey questions 16 and 19 were independent questions designed to measure the attitudes and beliefs of teachers about their feelings toward the Grade 9 Transition Program. Table 34 reported that 60.0% of teachers responded positively to survey question 16; whereas, there was a 6.7% response rate for "not applicable"; the remaining rate for the negative response rate was an overall 33.4%. The bell curve of question 16 data had a positively skewed distribution. The skewed distribution determined that participants selected positive response rates above the median and mode of the central tendency. The results from the data produced a standard deviation of 1.12. Sixty-eight percent of participants selected within one standard deviation of the mean. The mean score of survey question 16 measured 2.93 which exhibited that the majority of participants agreed with survey question 16. The range between one standard deviation of the mean consisted of 1.81-4.05. The median score of 2 portrayed that over 50% participants agreed with the survey question. The mode score of 2 spelled that participants had chosen to agree with question

12.

Table 34

Grade 9 Teacher Survey Question 16: My Students Have Shown Academic Improvement as a Result of Parent Involvement with Curriculum Activities

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Applicable	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
		Teachers	(N=15)		
Q16	1	8	1	1	4
Percent	6.7%	53.3%	6.7%	6.7%	26.7%

Note. Dash indicates that data were not obtained or not reported. Mean = 2.93, Median = 2, Mode = 2, Standard Deviation = 1.12.

Teacher survey question 19 in Table 35 reported a 46.6% positive response rate. The negative response rate was 40.0% with the remaining rate for "not applicable" being an overall 13.3%. The bell curve of question 19 data had a positively skewed distribution. The skewed distribution determined that participants selected positive responses rates above the median and mode of the central tendency. The mean score of teacher survey question 19 measured 3.20 which exhibited that the majority of participants did not agree or consider survey question 19 not applicable. The median score of 3 described that over 50% of the participants disagreed with the survey question. The mode score of 5 expressed that participants agreed with question 19. The results from the data created a standard deviation of 1.11. Sixty-eight percent of participants had chosen within one standard deviation of the mean. The range between one standard deviation of the mean coincided along 2.09-4.31.

Table 35

Grade 9 Teacher Survey Question 19: Parent Involvement Has Increased My Students' Attendance Rate

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Applicable	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
		Teachers	(N=15)		
Q16	2	5	2	-	6
Percent	13.3%	33.3%	13.3%	-	40.0%

Note. Dash indicates that data were not obtained or not reported. Mean = 3.20, Median = 3, Mode = 5, Standard Deviation = 1.11.

Table 36 provides response data from the teacher participants encompassing Grade 9 teacher survey question 17. Table 37 provides response data from the student participants encompassing Grade 9 teacher survey question 19. Teacher survey question 17 and student survey question 19 were independent questions designed to measure the attitudes and beliefs of teachers about their feelings toward the Grade 9 Transition Program.

Table 36 reports that 60.0% of teachers responded positively to survey question 17, whereas there was a 13.3% response rate for "not applicable"; the remaining rate for the negative response rate was an overall 26.7%. The bell curve of question 17 data had a positively skewed distribution. The skewed distribution determined that participants selected positive response rates above the median and mode of the central tendency. The results from the data produced a standard deviation of 1.12. Sixty-eight percent of participants selected within one standard deviation of the mean. The mean score of survey question 17 measured 2.80 which exhibited that the majority of participants agreed with survey question 16. The range between one standard deviation of the mean consisted of 1.78-4.02. The median score of 2 portrayed that over 50% of participants

agreed with the survey question. The mode score of 2 spelled that participants had chosen to agree with question 17.

Table 36

Grade 9 Teacher Survey Question 17: My Students Have Shown Academic Improvement as a Result of Parent Involvement with Extra-Curriculum Activities

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Applicable	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
		Teachers	(N=15)		
Q17	2	7	2	-	4
Percent	13.3%	46.7%	13.3%	-	26.7%

Note. Dash indicates that data were not obtained or not reported. Mean = 2.80, Median = 2, Mode = 2, Standard Deviation = 1.02.

Student survey question 2 in Table 37 reports a 63.9% positive response rate. The negative response rate was 21.4% with the remaining rate for "not applicable" being an overall 14.6%. The bell curve of question 2 data had a positively skewed distribution. The skewed distribution determined that participants selected positive response rates above the median and mode of the central tendency. The mean score of survey question 2 measured 2.54 which demonstrated that the majority of participants agreed with survey question 2. The results from the data created a standard deviation of 0.30. Sixty-eight percent of participants had chosen within one standard deviation of the mean. The range between one standard deviation of the mean coincided along 2.24-2.84. The median and mode of the survey question was 2. The median score represented that over 50% of participants selected a positive rate for question 2 of the survey. The mode score of 2 interpreted that participants selected "agreed" to answer survey question 2.

Table 37

Grade 9 Student Survey Question 2: I Participate in Extra-Curriculum Activities After School

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Applicable	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
		Students	(N=219)		
Q2	41	99	32	13	34
Percent	18.7%	45.2%	14.6%	5.9%	15.5%

Note. Mean = 2.54, Median = 2, Mode = 2, Standard Deviation = 0.30.

Table 38 presents the male and female Grade 9 student survey results that were aligned with the research questions. The table includes 110 male student responses to the survey including raw scores and percentages. Research question 2 was answered by student survey questions 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, and 17 and had positive response rates of 68.2%, 60.0%, 65.4%, 59.1%, 71.8%, and 68.1%. Student survey question 12 had a negative response rate of 30.0%. The table also includes 109 female student responses to the survey including raw scores and percentages. Research question 2 was answered by student survey questions 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, and 17 had positive response rates of 66.1%, 62.4%, 57.8%, 60.6%, 61.5%, and 70.7%. Student survey question 11 had a negative response rate of 29.3%.

Table 38

Research Question 2 Grade 9 Student Survey: Male and Female Student Analysis

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Applicable	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
		Male Students	(N=110)		
Independent Questions					
Q9	21.8%(24)	46.4%(51)	14.5%(16)	4.5%(5)	12.7%(14)
Q10	12.7%(14)	47.3%(52)	12.7%(14)	8.2%(9)	19.1%(21)
Q11	14.5%(16)	50.9%(56)	9.1%(10)	10.0%(11)	15.5%(17)
Q12	11.8%(13)	47.3%(52)	10.9%(12)	5.5%(6)	24.5%(27)
Q13	11.8%(13)	60.0%(66)	4.5%(5)	9.1%(10)	14.5%(16)
Q17	14.5%(16)	43.6%(48)	16.4(18)	5.5%(6)	20.0%(22)
		Female Students	(N=109)		
Independent Questions					
Q9	20.2%(22)	45.9%(50)	10.1%(11)	8.3%(9)	15.6%(17)
Q10	21.1%(23)	41.3%(45)	22.0%(24)	7.3%(8)	8.3%(9)
Q11	15.6%(17)	42.2%(46)	12.8%(14)	11.0%(12)	18.3%(20)
Q12	19.3%(21)	41.3%(45)	18.3%(20)	2.8%(3)	18.3%(20)
Q13	9.2%(10)	52.3%(57)	13.8%(15)	4.6%(5)	20.2%(22)
Q17	23.9%(26)	46.8%(51)	10.1%(11)	7.3%(8)	11.9%(13)

Note. Research Question 2: What impact does the transition program have on teacher and student perception of student success?

Results from Research Question 3

How does the transition program improve student performance as measured by the academic indicator of English 1, between Grade 9 students during the 2011-2012 school year implementation of the transition program and Grade 9 students during the 2010-2011 school year prior to the implementation of the transition program? The focus of Research Question 3 was the academic and preparation of student successes and whether the program had a positive or negative impact on Grade 9 students. The mean score represented the arithmetic average score of an entire set of scores. The mean was

coupled with the standard deviation which is a measure of the extent to which scores in a distribution deviate from their mean. In addition, the median score represents the middle point in a distribution of scores and the mode is the most frequently occurring score in a distribution. The calculated central tendencies were utilized to draw conclusions about the study's research questions. Research Question 3 was directly answered through teacher survey questions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 9, 14 and student survey questions 1, 3, 7, 8, 14, 15, and 16. Tables, in addition to narratives, provide a systematic presentation of results.

Table 39 provides response data from the teacher participants encompassing Grade 9 teacher survey questions 1. Table 40 provides response data from the teacher participants encompassing Grade 9 teacher survey question 3. Teacher survey questions 1 and 3 were independent questions designed to measure the attitudes and beliefs of teachers about their feelings toward the Grade 9 Transition Program. Table 39 shows that 66.6% of teachers responded positively to survey question 1, whereas there was a 33.3% negative response rate. The bell curve of question 1 data had a positively skewed distribution. The skewed distribution determined that participants selected positive response rates above the median and mode of the central tendency. The results from the data produced a standard deviation of 1.30. Sixty-eight percent of participants selected were within one standard deviation of the mean. The mean score of survey question 1 measured 2.73 which exhibited that the majority of participants agreed with survey question 1. The range between one standard deviation of the mean consisted of 1.43-4.03. The median score of 2 portrayed that over 50% of participants agreed with the survey question. The mode score of 2 spelled that participants had chosen to agree with question 1.

Table 39

Grade 9 Teacher Survey Question 1: I Am Able to Teach My Students by Their Individual Strengths and Weakness

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Applicable	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
		Teachers	(N=15)		
Q1	2	8	-	2	3
Percent	13.3%	53.3%	-	13.3%	20.0%

Note. Dash indicates that data were not obtained or not reported. Mean = 2.73, Median = 2, Mode = 2, Standard Deviation = 1.30.

Teacher survey question 3 in Table 40 reports a 53.4% positive response rate. The negative response rate was 33.4% with the remaining rate for "not applicable" being an overall 13.3%. The bell curve of question 3 data had a positively skewed distribution. The skewed distribution determined that participants selected positive response rates above the median and mode of the central tendency. The mean score of teacher survey question 3 measured 3.00 which demonstrated that the majority of participants agreed with survey question 3. The results from the data created a standard deviation of 1.13. Sixty-eight percent of participants had chosen within one standard deviation of the mean. The range between one standard deviation of the mean coincided along 2.87-4.13. The mode score of 2 interpreted that participants selected "agreed" to answer survey question 3. The median score of 3 defined that over 50% of participants agreed with the survey question.

Table 40

Grade 9 Teacher Survey Question 3: My School Has an Effective Enrichment/Remediation Program to Help Students Increase Their Academic Performance

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Applicable	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
		Teachers	(N=15)		
Q3	1	7	2	1	4
Percent	6.7%	46.7%	13.3%	6.7%	26.7%

Note. Mean = 3.00, Median = 3, Mode = 2, Standard Deviation =1.13.

Table 41 provides response data from the teacher participants encompassing Grade 9 teacher survey question 2. Table 42 provides response data from the teacher participants encompassing Grade 9 teacher survey question 4. Teacher survey questions 2 and 4 were independent questions designed to measure the attitudes and beliefs of teachers about their feelings toward the Grade 9 Transition Program.

Table 41 shows that 53.4% of teachers responded positively to survey question 2, whereas there was a 33.3% negative response rate. The overall remaining 13.3% responded "not applicable." The bell curve of question 2 data had a positively skewed distribution. The skewed distribution determined that participants selected positive response rates above the median and mode of the central tendency. The results from the data produced a standard deviation of 1.00. Sixty-eight percent of participants selected were within one standard deviation of the mean. The mean score of survey question 2 measured 3.07 which exhibited that the majority of participants agreed with survey question 2. The range between one standard deviation of the mean consisted of 2.07-4.07. The median score of 2 portrayed that over 50% of participants agreed with the survey question. The mode score of 2 spelled that participants had chosen to agree with

question 12.

Table 41

Grade 9 Teacher Survey Question 2: The Enrichment/Remediation Intervention That is In Place at My School Enhances Grade 9 Students' Academic Performance

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Applicable	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
		Teachers	(N=15)		
Q2	1	7	2	-	5
Percent	6.7%	46.7%	13.3%	-	33.3%

Note. Dash indicates that data were not obtained or not reported. Mean = 3.07, Median = 2, Mode = 2, Standard Deviation = 1.00.

Teacher survey question 4 in Table 42 reports a 73.3% positive response rate. The negative response rate was 20.0% with the remaining rate for "not applicable" being an overall 6.7%. The bell curve of question 4 data had a positively skewed distribution. The skewed distribution determined that participants selected positive response rates above the median and mode of the central tendency. The mean score of teacher survey question 4 measured 2.40 which displayed that the majority of participants agreed with survey question 4. The standard deviation of the data table was 1.14. Sixty-eight percent of participants had chosen within one standard deviation of the mean. The range between one standard deviation of the mean coincided along 1.26-3.54. The median score of 2 defined that over 50% of participants agreed with the survey question. The mode score of 2 expressed that participants had elected to agree with question 4.

Table 42

Grade 9 Teacher Survey Question 4: I Have Access to Common Formative Assessments (CFA) Using Monitored Data Collected by Stakeholders

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Applicable	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
		Teachers	(N=15)		
Q4	3	8	1	1	2
Percent	20.0%	53.3%	6.7%	6.7%	13.3%

Note. Mean = 2.40, Median = 2, Mode = 2, Standard Deviation = 1.14.

Table 43 provides response data from the teacher participants encompassing Grade 9 teacher survey question 14. Table 44 provides response data from the student participants encompassing student survey question 7. Teacher survey question 14 and student survey question 7 were independent questions designed to measure the attitudes and beliefs of teachers and students about their feelings toward the Grade 9 Transition Program.

Table 43 shows that 93.3% of teachers responded positively to survey question 14; whereas, there was a 6.7% negative response rate. The overall remaining 0.0% responded "not applicable." The bell curve of question 14 data had a positively skewed distribution. The skewed distribution determined that participants selected positive response rates above the median and mode of the central tendency. The results from the data produced a standard deviation of 0.63. Sixty-eight percent of participants selected within one standard deviation of the mean. The mean score of survey question 14 measured 2.07 which exhibited that the majority of participants agreed with survey question 14. The range between one standard deviation of the mean consisted of 1.44-2.70. The median score of 2 portrayed that over 50% of participants agreed with the survey question. The mode score of 2 spelled that participants had chosen to agree with

question 14.

Table 43

Grade 9 Teacher Survey Question 14: During a Typical School Day I Feel Effective with My Teaching Practices

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Applicable	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
		Teachers	(N=15)		
Q14	2	12	-	-	1
Percent	13.3%	80.0%	-	-	6.7%

Note. Dash indicates that data were not obtained or not reported. Mean = 2.07, Median = 2, Mode = 2, Standard Deviation = 0.63.

Student survey question 7 in Table 44 reports a 75.8% positive response rate. The negative response rate was 18.7% with the remaining rate for "not applicable" being an overall 5.5%. The mean score of student survey question 7 measured 2.33 which displayed that the majority of participants agreed with survey question 7. The median score of 2 defined that over 50% of participants agreed with the survey question. The mode score of 2 expressed that participants had elected to agree with question 7. The bell curve of question 7 data had a positively skewed distribution. The skewed distribution determined that participants selected positive response rates above the median and mode of the central tendency. The standard deviation was 0.24 with 68% of participants choosing within one standard deviation of the mean. The range between one standard deviation of the mean coincided along 2.09-2.57.

Table 44

Grade 9 Student Survey Question 7: My Teachers are Prepared for Class When the Bell Starts the Instructional Period

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Applicable	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
		Students	(N=219)		
Q7	59	107	12	4	37
Percent	26.9%	48.9%	5.5%	1.8%	16.9%

Note. Mean = 2.33, Median = 2, Mode = 2, Standard Deviation = 0.24.

Table 45 provides response data from the student participants encompassing Grade 9 student survey question 1. Table 46 provides response data from the teacher participants encompassing teacher survey question 5. Student survey question 1 and teacher survey question 5 were independent questions designed to measure the attitudes and beliefs of teachers and students about their feelings toward the Grade 9 Transition Program.

Table 45 shows that 54.4% of students responded positively to survey question 1, whereas there was a 35.6% negative response rate. The overall remaining 10.0% responded "not applicable." The bell curve of question 1 data had a positively skewed distribution. The skewed distribution determined that participants selected positive response rates above the median and mode of the central tendency. The results from the data produced a standard deviation of 0.50. Sixty-eight percent of participants selected within one standard deviation of the mean. The mean score of survey question 1 measured 2.93 which exhibited that the majority of participants agreed with survey question 1. The range between one standard deviation of the mean consisted of 2.43-3.43. The median score of 2 portrayed that over 50% of participants agreed with the survey question. The mode score of 2 spelled that participants had chosen to agree with

question 1.

Table 45

Grade 9 Student Survey Question 1: I Speak to My Teachers at Least Once Per Week about My Grades

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Applicable	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
		Students	(N=219)		
Q1	28	91	22	25	53
Percent	12.8%	41.6%	10.0%	11.4%	24.2%

Note. Mean = 2.93, Median = 2, Mode = 2, Standard Deviation = .50.

Teacher survey question 5 in Table 46 reported a 100.0% positive response rate. The negative response rate was 0.0% with the remaining rate for "not applicable" being an overall 0.0%. The bell curve of question 5 data had a positively skewed distribution. The skewed distribution determined that participants selected positive response rates above the median and mode of the central tendency. The mean score of teacher survey question 5 measured 1.47 which demonstrated that the majority of participants agreed with teacher question 5. The standard deviation was 0.50 with 68% of participants choosing within one standard deviation of the mean. The range between one standard deviation of the mean coincided along 0.97-1.97. The median score of 1 represented that over 50% of participants agreed with the survey question. The mode score of 1 expressed that participants had chosen to agree with question 5.

Table 46

Grade 9 Teacher Survey Question 5: Student-Teacher relationships Affect Overall School Success

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Applicable	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
		Teachers	(N=15)		
Q5	8	7	-	-	-
Percent	53.3%	46.7%	-	-	-

Note. Dash indicates that data were not obtained or not reported. Mean = 1.47, Median = 1, Mode = 1, Standard Deviation = 0.50.

Table 47 provides response data from the student participants encompassing Grade 9 student survey question 14. Table 48 provides response data from the student participants encompassing Grade 9 student survey question 15. Table 49 provided response data from the student participants encompassing Grade 9 student survey question 17. Student survey questions 14, 15, and 17 were independent questions designed to measure the attitudes and beliefs of students about their feelings toward the Grade 9 Transition Program.

Table 47 shows that 78.6% of students responded positively to survey question 14, whereas there was an 18.3% negative response rate. The overall remaining 3.2% responded "not applicable." The bell curve of question 14 data had a positively skewed distribution. The skewed distribution determined that participants selected positive response rates above the median and mode of the central tendency. The mean score of student survey question 14 measured 2.30 which exhibited that the majority of participants agreed with student question 14. The standard deviation was 0.21 with 68% of participants choosing within one standard deviation of the mean. The range between one standard deviation of the mean coincided along 2.09-2.71. The median score of 2

described that over 50% of participants agreed with the survey question. The mode score of 2 denoted that participants had favored to agree with question 14.

Table 47

Grade 9 Student Survey Question 14: My Teachers Create Classroom Activities that Make Me Want to Learn New Things

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Applicable	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
		Students	(N=219)		
Q14	49	123	7	12	28
Percent	22.4%	56.2%	3.2%	5.5%	12.8%

Note. Mean = 2.30, Median = 2, Mode = 2, Standard Deviation = .21.

Student survey question 15 in Table 48 reported a 76.3% positive response rate. The negative response rate was 22.4% with the remaining rate for "not applicable" being an overall 1.4%. The bell curve of question 15 data had a positively skewed distribution. The skewed distribution determined that participants selected positive response rates above the median and mode of the central tendency. The results from the data produced a standard deviation of 0.38. Sixty-eight percent of participants selected within one standard deviation of the mean. The mean score of survey question 15 measured 2.43 which exhibited that the majority of participants agreed with survey question 15. The range between one standard deviation of the mean consisted of 2.05-2.81. The median score of 2 portrayed that over 50% of participants agreed with the survey question. The mode score of 2 spelled that participants had chosen to agree with question 15.

Table 48

Grade 9 Student Survey Question 15: An Important Reason Why I Do My Schoolwork is Because I Like to Learn New Things

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Applicable	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
		Students	(N=219)		
Q15	51	116	3	5	44
Percent	23.3%	53.0%	1.4%	2.3%	20.1%

Note. Mean = 2.43, Median = 2, Mode = 2, Standard Deviation = .38.

Student survey question 16 in Table 49 reports a 76.7% positive response rate. The negative response rate was 18.3% with the remaining rate for "not applicable" being an overall 5.0%. The mean score of student survey question 16 measured 2.41 which showed that the majority of participants agreed with student question 16. The standard deviation was 0.55 with 68% of participants choosing within one standard deviation of the mean. The range between one standard deviation of the mean coincided along 1.86-2.96. The bell curve of question 16 data had a positively skewed distribution. The skewed distribution determined that participants selected positive responses rates above the median and mode of the central tendency. The median score of 2 represented that over 50% of participants agreed with the survey question. The mode score of 2 denoted that participants had chosen to agree with question 16. The standard deviation was 0.55.

Table 49

Grade 9 Student Survey Question 16: I Enjoy Working on My Assignments When It Really Makes Me Think

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Applicable	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
		Students	(N=219)		
Q16	34	134	11	8	32
Percent	15.5%	61.2%	5.0%	3.7%	14.6%

Note. Mean = 2.41, Median = 2, Mode = 2, Standard Deviation = .55.

Table 50 provides response data from the student participants encompassing Grade 9 student survey question 8. Table 51 provides response data from the teacher participants encompassing teacher survey question 9. Student survey question 8 and teacher survey question 9 were independent questions designed to measure the attitudes and beliefs of teachers and students about their feelings toward the Grade 9 Transition Program. In Table 50, 57.5% of participants responded positively to survey question 8, whereas there was a 36.1% negative response rate. The overall remaining 6.4% responded not applicable. The bell curve of question 8 data had a positively skewed distribution. The skewed distribution determined participants selected positive response rates above the median and mode of the central tendency. The results from the data produced a standard deviation of 0.39. Sixty-eight percent of the participants selected within one standard deviation of the mean. The mean score of survey question 1 measured 2.87 which exhibited that the majority of participants agreed with survey question 8. The range between one standard deviation of the mean consisted of 2.48-3.26. The median score of 2 portrayed that over 50% of participants agreed with the survey question. The mode score of 2 spelled that participants had chosen to agree with question 8.

Table 50

Grade 9 Student Survey Question 8: When I Am Suspended From School During the 2011-2012 School Year I Received Academic Support From the Administrative Staff

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Applicable	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
		Students	(N=219)		
Q8	45	81	14	16	63
Percent	20.5%	37.0%	6.4%	7.3%	28.8%

Note. Mean = 2.87, Median = 2, Mode = 2, Standard Deviation = .39.

Teacher survey question 9 in Table 51 reports a 60.0% positive response rate. The negative response rate was 13.4% with the remaining rate for "not applicable" being an overall 26.7%. The bell curve of question 9 data had a positively skewed distribution. The skewed distribution determined that participants selected positive response rates above the median and mode of the central tendency. The mean score of teacher survey question 9 measured 2.93 which exhibited that the majority of participants agreed with teacher question 9. The standard deviation was 1.02 with 68% of participants choosing within one standard deviation of the mean. The range between one standard deviation of the mean coincided along 1.91-3.95. The median score of 2 described that over 50% participants agreed with the survey question. The mode score of 2 expressed that participants had favored to agree with question 9.

Table 51

Grade 9 Teacher Survey Question 9: My Students Who Are Suspended Receive Academic Support from the Administrative Staff

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Applicable	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
		Teachers	(N=15)		
Q9	2	7	4	1	1
Percent	13.3%	46.7%	26.7%	6.7%	6.7%

Note. Mean = 2.47, Median = 2, Mode = 2, Standard Deviation = 1.02.

Table 52 provides response data from the student participants encompassing Grade 9 student survey question 3. Student survey question 3 was an independent question designed to measure the attitudes and beliefs of students about their feelings toward the Grade 9 Transition Program

Table 52 shows that 60.7% of students responded positively to survey question 3; whereas, there was a 26.9% negative response rate. The overall remaining 12.3% responded "not applicable." The bell curve of question 3 data had a positively skewed distribution. The skewed distribution determined that participants selected positive responses rates above the median and mode of the central tendency. The results from the data produced a standard deviation of 0.37. Sixty-eight percent of participants selected within one standard deviation of the mean. The mean score of survey question 3 measured 2.73 which exhibited that the majority of participants agreed with survey question 3. The range between one standard deviation of the mean consisted of 2.36-3.10. The median score of 2 portrayed that over 50% of participants agreed with the survey question. The mode score of 2 spelled that participants had chosen to agree with question 3.

Table 52

Grade 9 Student Survey Question 3: Classroom Disruptions are Drawing Your Attention Away From Your Learning While the Teacher is Presenting the Curriculum

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Applicable	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
		Students	(N=219)		
Q3	29	104	27	16	43
Percent	13.2%	47.5%	12.3%	7.3%	19.6%

Note. Mean = 2.73, Median = 2, Mode = 2, Standard Deviation = .37.

Table 53 presents the male and female Grade 9 student survey results aligned with the research questions. The table includes 110 male student responses to the survey including raw scores and percentages. Research Question 3 was answered by student survey questions 1, 3, 7, 8, 14, 15, and 16 which had positive response rates of 56.2%, 60.9%, 68.1%, 66.3%, 75.4%, 60.9%, and 74.6%. Student survey question 15 had a negative response rate of 28.2%. The table also includes 109 female student responses to the survey including raw scores and percentages. Research Question 3 was answered by student survey questions 1, 3, 7, 8, 14, 15, and 16 and had positive response rates of 51.3%, 60.5%, 87.2%, 32.1%, 22.9%, 75.8%, and 78.9%. Student survey question 1 had a negative response rate of 35.8%.

Table 53

Research Question 3 Grade 9 Student Survey: Male/Female Student Analysis

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Applicable	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
		Male Students	(N=110)		
Independent Questions					
Q1	12.7%(14)	44.5%(49)	7.3%(8)	11.8%(13)	23.6%(26)
Q3	10.0%(11)	50.9%(56)	5.5%(6)	10.0%(11)	22.7%(25)
Q7	24.5%(27)	53.6%(59)	6.4%(7)	1.8%(2)	13.6%(15)
Q8	14.5%(16)	51.8%(57)	8.2%(9)	9.1%(10)	16.4%(18)
Q14	22.7%(25)	52.7%(58)	2.7%(3)	6.4%(7)	15.5%(17)
Q15	17.3%(19)	53.6%(59)	0.9%(1)	2.7%(3)	25.5%(28)
Q16	17.3%(19)	57.3%(63)	7.3%(8)	3.6%(4)	14.5%(16)
		Female Students	(N=109)		
Independent Questions					
Q1	12.8%(14)	38.5%(42)	12.8%(14)	11.0% (12)	24.8% (27)
Q3	17.4%(19)	43.1%(47)	19.3%(21)	3.7%(4)	16.5%(18)
Q7	29.4%(32)	57.8%(63)	5.5%(6)	0.9%(1)	6.4%(7)
Q8	26.6%(29)	5.5%(6)	5.5%(6)	6.4%(7)	25.7%(28)
Q14	22.0%(24)	0.9%(1)	4.6%(5)	4.6%(5)	9.2%(10)
Q15	29.4%(32)	46.4%(57)	1.8%(2)	1.8%(2)	14.7%(16)
Q16	13.8%(15)	65.1%(71)	2.8%(3)	3.7%(4)	14.7%(16)

Note. Research Question 3: How does the transition program improve student performance as measured by the academic indicator of English 1, between Grade 9 students during the 2011-2012 school year implementation of the transition program and Grade 9 students during the 2010-2011 school year prior to the implementation of the transition program?

Table 54 provides data from the student participants encompassing research question 3. Table 54 shows a comparison of student proficiency levels at level three or above with the North Carolina English 1 EOC state exam. The student performance was measured by the academic indicator of English 1 between Grade 9 students during the 2011-2012 school year implementation of the Transition Program and Grade 9 students during the 2010-2011 school year prior to the implementation of the Transition Program. Table 54 reports that there was a decrease in the number of students who were proficient

by 2.4% between Grade 9 students during 2010-2011 and 2011-2012.

Table 54

English 1 Reports of Disaggregated State, School System (LEA) and School Performance Data (%) for 2010-2012

	2010-2011	2011-2012
North Carolina	80.6	82.9
Urban School District	86.4	85.1
School 1	78.1	76.6
School 2	94.1	93.3
School 3	92.1	94.2
School X	84.8	82.4
School 4	84.9	83.5
School 5	84.5	83.5
School 6	82.9	83.6

Note. Adapted from NCDPI (2013).

Table 55 provides data from the student participants encompassing research question 3. Table 55 shows North Carolina English 1 EOC state exam reports of disaggregated School X and Urban School District Performance Data (%) for 2010-2012 by student subgroups. Table 55 also shows a comparison of student proficiency levels at level three or above with the North Carolina English 1 EOC state exam. The student performance was measured by the academic indicator of English 1 between Grade 9 students during the 2011-2012 school year implementation of the Transition Program and Grade 9 students during the 2010-2011 school year prior to the implementation of the Transition Program.

Table 55

English I Reports of Disaggregated School X and Urban School District Performance Data (%) for 2010-2012 by Student Subgroups

	2010-2011 Percent At or Above Level III		2011-2012 Percent At or Above Level III	
Student Subgroup	School X	Urban School District	School X	Urban School District
All Students	84.80%	86.40%	82.40%	85.10%
Female	89.40%	89.60%	85.20%	88.80%
Male	80.30%	83.30%	79.40%	81.40%
Black	67.10%	75.40%	76.00%	75.50%
Hispanic	68.10%	74.20%	58.60%	69.60%
White	94.40%	90.90%	91.90%	90.40%
Female – Black	73.50%	85.40%	79.50%	82.10%
Female – Hispanic	73.50%	77.60%	65.40%	76.40%
Female – White	>95%	92.80%	93.10%	92.90%
Male – Black	61.10%	65.90%	71.00%	69.30%
Male – Hispanic	63.20%	70.50%	53.10%	63.60%
Male – White	91.70%	89.20%	90.60%	87.90%
Economically Disadvantaged	69.90%	75.20%	65.10%	72.90%
Limited English Proficiency	55.30%	53.30%	24.20%	44.70%
Students With Disabilities	35.00%	36.90%	35.70%	40.40%

Note. Adapted from NCDPI (2013).

Table 56 provides data from the student participants encompassing Research Question 3. Table 56 shows North Carolina English 1 EOC state exam reports of disaggregated School X and Urban School District Performance Data (%) for 2010-2012 by student subgroups. Table 56 also shows a comparison of student enrollment for the North Carolina English 1 EOC state exam. The percentage of change for students taking the English 1 EOC state exam showed enrollment for School X Grade 9 students had a decline of 15%. Urban School District only had a decrease of only 2%. Table 56 shows

that fewer students were enrolled to take the English I EOC. The highest percentage of change per subgroup at School X was Limited English Proficiency (LEP) students with a 30% decrease and Black females with an increase of 29%. Urban School District had its highest percentage of change per subgroup with an increase of 16% for Black males and a decrease of 14% by White males.

Table 56

English I Reports of Disaggregated School X and Urban School District Performance Data (%) for 2010 – 2012 by Student Subgroups

Student Subgroup	2010-2011	2011-2012	Percentage of change	2010-2011	2011-2012	Percentage of change
	School X			Urban School District		
All Students	415	352	-15%	2295	2246	-2%
Female	207	182	-12%	1111	1119	1%
Male	208	170	-18%	1184	1127	-5%
Black	70	75	7%	403	462	15%
Hispanic	72	58	-19%	256	263	3%
White	249	198	-20%	1516	1387	-9%
Female – Black	34	44	29%	198	224	13%
Female – Hispanic	34	26	-24%	134	123	-8%
Female – White	128	102	-20%	720	701	-3%
Male – Black	36	31	-14%	205	238	16%
Male – Hispanic	38	32	-16%	122	140	15%
Male – White	121	96	-21%	796	686	-14%
Economically Disadvantaged	163	152	-7%	875	912	4%
Limited English Proficiency	47	33	-30%	122	132	8%
Students With Disabilities	60	56	-7%	325	287	-12%

Note. Adapted from NCDPI (2013).

Summary

The results of the study reported in Chapter 4 explored the impact of a Grade 9 transition program on student success. The student survey was developed based on the

purpose of the study and research questions by targeting the exploration of the intervention's impact on students transitioning to Grade 9: (a) belief that students are motivated to complete their school assignments, (b) belief that students are motivated to attend school, (c) belief that teachers care about their students, (d) belief that students care about their education, and (e) belief that parents are involved with their students' education. The teacher survey was developed based on the purpose of the study and research questions by targeting the exploration of the intervention's impact on students transitioning to Grade 9: (a) teacher perception, (b) academic performance, (c) parent involvement, and (d) attendance. The teachers and Grade 9 students were asked to respond to a 5-point Likert scale survey which was directly related to the research questions. The research method chosen by the researcher was cross-sectional research in which the data were collected using two surveys. Once the results from the Grade 9 teachers and Grade 9 students survey were collected, the data were entered into statistical software SPSS to calculate the mean, median, mode, standard deviation, and response rates. The data from the statistical software were utilized to establish themes in order to produce a narrative analysis. A further discussion of the results is presented in Chapter 5.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Overview

The purpose of this project was to analyze the impact of a Grade 9 Transition Program on students in the Piedmont area of North Carolina using a quantitative research study. The setting in which the research took place was a large high school (School X). School X was located in a single story building that was approximately 10 years old. School X contained 71 classrooms within nine departments. A variety of courses were offered to the students at this school. English, science, mathematics, social studies, world languages, career and technical education, fine arts, physical education, JROTC, and special education were all offered. School X offered sports such as football, volleyball, basketball, wrestling, track, soccer, and cheerleading (CCS, 2011).

According to John W. Creswell (2009), quantitative research is a means for testing objective theories by examining the relationship among variables. The reason for quantitative research was to obtain statistical quantitative data through student surveys and teacher surveys. The quantitative data produced by SPSS using both surveys were used to establish themes. The established themes were utilized to create tables and narratives for presenting the results of the study. Chapter 5 presents an introduction of the dissertation, implications of the findings, limitations, and recommendations for further research.

Introduction of the Dissertation

The format of the data collection procedures incorporated surveys based on the purpose of the study and the three research questions. The surveys were designed to measure the attitudes and beliefs of a given statement based on the degree to which a participant agrees, disagrees, or believes the statement is not applicable. The student

survey included 17 questions covering topics of academics, attendance, perception, and parental involvement. The remaining four questions of the student survey pertained to demographic and background information of the students. The teacher survey included 20 questions covering topics of academics, attendance, perception, and parental involvement. The remaining six questions of the teacher survey pertained to demographic and background information of the teachers.

Once the surveys were completed, numeric values were assigned to the survey. The computer software SPSS was utilized to calculate the measures of central tendency, mean, median, mode, and standard deviation. In addition, using the student and teacher responses, the researcher calculated positive response rates, negative response rates, and not applicable/not observed rates. The measures of central tendency constructed single numerical values that were used to describe the entire set of scores. The mean score represented the average score of an entire set of scores. The mean was joined with the standard deviation which is a measure of scores in a distribution deviated from their mean. The median scores represent the middle point in a distribution of scores and the mode is the most frequently occurring score in a distribution. The calculation of the central tendencies and the response rates were utilized to draw conclusions about the study's three research questions. For the purpose of this study, the researcher illustrated that the closer the mean score approaches 1, the stronger the student participants agreed with the statement; the closer the mean score approaches 5, the stronger the student participants disagreed with the statement. The standard deviation depicts how much variation there was from the mean. A low standard deviation depicts that the data points tended to be close to the mean, whereas a high standard deviation showed that the data were spread out over a large range of values.

Once the data were collected and analyzed, the researcher triangulated the data from the student and teacher surveys' quantitative numeric values in order to identify themes that emerged from the study to present the results of the research through qualitative analysis. Literature from Chapter 2 was utilized as support for the study, justification for the research to be conducted, and for comparative analysis; therefore, literature from Chapter 2 is incorporated into Chapter 5 and will be presented later in the chapter under implications of the findings. The Transition Program at School X's impact on student motivation was evaluated through three guiding research questions.

Research Question 1. Research Question 1 was designed by the researcher to analyze the impact of absenteeism during implementation of the transition program for Grade 9 students during the 2011-2012 school year. Based on the mean score and standard deviation for teacher survey questions 6 and 8, the researcher discovered that the majority of teacher participants agreed with the statements. Both questions 6 and 8 dealt with teacher planning and projects created that affected students motivated to attend school. According to Allensworth and Easton (2007), the most powerful predictors of whether a student will complete high school includes course performance and attendance during the first year of high school. Results from teacher survey question 6 felt that academic planning for intervention programs had a positive impact on student attendance. The researcher felt that even though a plan was in place to improve attendance, other initiatives should have been listed that involved support specialists such as school social workers, guidance counselors, and other government agencies. The researcher found that teacher survey question 8 involved teachers developing projects that would motivate students to attend school, thus reducing truancy. Truancy is defined as an unexcused absence, not attending, or showing up late for class and not having a valid reason as

defined by the school (American Heritage Dictionary, 2009). The researcher also believed that the administrative staff must create opportunities for activities to be in place that peak students' interest in wanting to attend School X. The participants who responded to survey questions 6 and 8 were Grade 9 teachers who taught Grade 9 students. Through positive response rates and mean scores for teacher survey questions 6 and 8, the researcher determined through data analysis that the Grade 9 Transition Program had a positive impact on Grade 9 students in reference to academic support.

Teacher survey question 7 stated that participants believed that School X provided funds that increased student attendance to their school. Teacher survey question 10 believed that administrative staff had effective plans in place that monitored and increased student attendance in school. Based on the data that the researcher collected and analyzed for teacher survey questions 7 and 10, the researcher ascertained that the majority of teacher participants agreed with the questions' statements. Grade 9 teacher responses for questions 7 and 10 were similar and agreed that programs and measures must be in place to reduce absenteeism for Grade 9 students. Due to the positive response rates and mean scores for teacher survey questions 7 and 10, the researcher determined that the Grade 9 Transition Program had an impact that was positive on student absenteeism.

Student survey question 5 explained that participants had an opportunity to work with their peers in order to complete assignments after an absence. Weiss and Bearman (2007) stated that attendance patterns may split friendships and ties to other students. The intervention programs will create team building with collaborative activities. Participants agreed with student survey question 6 which meant students had absence of no more than 27 days during the school year. According to Weiss and Bearman,

transition effects are not limited to grades alone. Based on the positive response rates, standard deviations, and mean scores for teacher survey questions 5 and 6, the researcher determined through the research that the Grade 9 Transition Program had a positive impact on Grade 9 students' attendance rates. Based on the results of the surveys, the participants felt that the Transition Program did have an effect on the attendance of Grade 9 students. In comparison to Felicia Dyke's (2007) research, the Transition Program did have an impact on student attendance. Although the teacher and student participants indicated positive results within the survey, the measurement in determining the effectiveness of the Transition Program was not evident in terms of monitoring student attendance data.

Research Question 2. What impact does the Transition Program have on teacher and student perception of student success? Student successes were determined by two indicators. The first indicator was how students are supported by stakeholders dealing with their academics. The successes of student academics were measured by how teachers perceived student readiness for the instructional period, student perception of how teachers cared about their academics, and how parents were involved in the educational service of their students. Teacher participants agreed with survey question 18 that parents were contacted within 24 hours to discuss academics. The purpose of the communication was to get parents involved with the educational decision making of their students. The parents of many struggling readers are accustomed to receiving only negative communications from school, and upon receiving a positive comment, parents and adolescent students are likely to feel pride which can lead to enhanced connections between home and school and increased engagement for students (Smith & Wilhelm, 2004). Teachers also believed that parents were able to contact them within 24 hours to

discuss student behaviors and interventions that would enhance student learning. Mizelle (2000) further elaborated that teachers and administrators can inform parents about transition activities and encourage them to participate. Based on the mean score and standard deviation for teacher survey questions 18 and 20, the researcher discovered that the majority of teacher participants agreed with the question statements. Due to the close pattern of responses with question 18 or 20, an additional participant would most likely choose a response around the mean. It is the value which is most likely to be closest to the next observation. The means hold true due to the standard deviation data points clustering around the mean scores. Based on the positive response rates and mean scores for teacher survey questions 18 and 20, the researcher ascertained through the research that the Grade 9 Transition Program had a positive impact on Grade 9 students when it came to stakeholder communication.

Teacher survey question 12 represented how teachers believed their students were to learn. Teachers responded that they felt strongly about students caring about learning and getting good grades. Research has shown that teachers can influence student motivation, that certain practices do work to increase time spent on task, and that there are ways to make assigned work more engaging and more effective for students at all levels (Brewster & Fager, 2000). Question 15 of the teacher survey dealt with students being prepared for the instrutional period. Participants stated that the students they taught were not organized and not prepared to learn the academic content. Researchers have supported intrinsic motivation as the degree to which participants report enjoying the activity, finding the activity interesting, or being willing to engage in the activity again (Cooper et al., 2008). The researcher discovered that if an additional teacher participant answered question 12 or 15, the participant would most likely choose a response around

the mean. It is the value which is most likely to be closest to the next observation. The means hold true due to the standard deviations' data points clustering around the mean scores. The response rates and the mean score for teacher survey questions 12 and 15 showed that the Grade 9 Transition Program had a conflicting impact on Grade 9 student successes.

Survey question 11 of the teacher participants spoke about the attendance rate of the students whom they served. Teachers believed that the students they taught attended school at least 85% of the school year. Teacher survey question 13 talks about the preception teachers felt about students enjoying attending School X. Teachers felt strongly that students enjoyed being at School X during the 2011-2012 school year. Teachers also felt that planning activities that kept students engaged in learning also played a vital role in academic learning. According to research, teachers need to take the time to instruct children in basic social skills to ensure they have a successful classroom management program (Bellanca & Forarty, 2003).

Grade 9 teacher survey question 16 dealt with students showing academic improvement as a result of parent involvement. Parent involvement also affected other aspects of schooling, such as better attendance (Henderson & Mapp, 2002), greater preparedness for classes (Simon, 2004), and less disruptive behavior in school (Guttman & Midgley, 2000). According to Alspaugh (1998), students who experience academic success have a greater chance of completing high school. Also, the researcher found that participants also agreed that parent involvement increases student attendance rates which was question 19 of the teacher survey.

Student survey questions 13 and 17 pertained to how students perceived teachers in relationship to student academic needs. An individual teacher's whole classroom

approach can impair enthusiasm and enjoyment in the classroom if he or she does not create an atmosphere which is conducive to learning (Phillips & Lindsay, 2006). On the other hand, some teachers do spark student motivation but fumble at maintaining it because they do not have the power to promote long-term learning (Bartholomew, 2008). Based on the positive response rates and mean scores for teacher survey questions 13 and 17, the researcher determined through the survey instrument that students believed that teachers cared about their academic needs.

Student survey questions 10 and 11 presented participant findings on how they perceived parental involvement dealing with educational topics. Parent involvement in the transition process to high school can be encouraged through a variety of activities (Mizelle, 2000). Furthermore, Mizelle (2000) stated that parents may be invited to participate in a conference with his or her child and the high school counselor to discuss course work and schedules, visit the high school with his or her child in the spring or in the fall, spend a day at the high school to help them understand what their children's lives will be like, and help design and facilitate some of the articulation activities for students. The majority of student participants agreed with the questions' statements. The means hold true due to the standard deviations' data points clustering around the mean scores. Based on the positive response rates and mean scores for student survey questions 10 and 11, the researcher determined through the research that the Grade 9 Transition Program had a positive impact on stakeholder communication. In comparison to Blackwell's (2008) research, the Transition Programs did have an impact on student success dealing with academic and attendance indicators. The effectiveness of the Transition Program was evident in terms of the teacher and student participants' positive results within the survey.

Research Question 3. How does the Transition Program improve student performance as measured by the academic indicator of English 1 between Grade 9 students during the 2011-2012 school year implementation of the Transition Program and Grade 9 students during the 2010-2011 school year prior to the implementation of the Transition Program? Based on the mean score and standard deviation for teacher and student survey questions, the researcher discovered that the majority of teacher participants agreed with the questions' statements. Teacher responses were based on the enrichment and intervention programs that were in place due to formative and informative assessment data collected by the school. Teachers also provided responses based on teacher preparedness when facilitating instruction. Students believed that teachers were prepared for teaching when the instructional period started. Students also included in their responses that teachers created office hours after school to provide additional academic support for the students whom they serve. Researchers have shown that before and after school tutoring programs improve academic success by helping students with actual class assignments and teaching various strategies that students can generalize to other academic problems (Hock et al., 2001). Based on the positive response rates and mean scores for Research Question 3, the researcher determined through the research that the Grade 9 Transition Program had a positive impact on Grade 9 students when students received academic support.

Implications of the Findings

The research questions were incorporated into two distinct research procedures which included Grade 9 student and Grade 9 teacher surveys. The data was collected using only first year Grade 9 students and Grade 9 teachers who taught those participants. Once the data were collected, analyzed, and the results of the study presented, the

researcher concluded with the implications of the findings established by the case study's results. The researcher also supplied Urban school district with the results of the survey for future professional development for its staff to enhance the Transition Program at its high schools.

Research Question 1 was designed by the researcher to analyze the impact of absenteeism with Grade 9 students during the 2011-2012 school year implementation of the Transition Program. Grade 9 student survey questions 4, 5, and 6 and teacher survey questions 6, 7, 8, and 10 were utilized to express the participants' stances and principles towards Research Question 1 of the study. The results for the research attained that the Transition Program had a positive impact on student successes as defined by the indicators. The researcher ascertained that when students are absent from school, measures are in place to help support them for academic enhancement. The researcher's recommendation to the School Leadership Team at the research site is for the staff to create strategies that track attendance data based on graduation requirements. The recommendation by the researcher is due to the relationship and closeness of the teachers with students; in addition, research has displayed that teachers can positively or negatively influence student efficacy. Additionally, the researcher's recommendation was endorsed through data provided by the Grade 9 student and teacher surveys.

The researcher's recommendations were supported by various literature resources to enhance student learning and promotion in order to earn credit towards graduation. In a study conducted by Blackwell (2008), the researcher analyzed the impact of a Transition Program on ninth-grade student academic performance. The results of the study led Blackwell to several recommendations for revision and expansion of a Transition Program: (a) revise or implement new attendance policies, (b) provide

alternative means to get parents involved in their child's education, (c) establish mentors more time to meet with their ninth-grade mentees, (d) establish a time for teachers to create a Transition Program, and (e) provide professional development for improving student behavior. The study administered by Blackwell provided the researcher with comparative data in order to outline support for the researcher's own study appertaining to the Transition Program.

Research has provided a mass of knowledge exhibiting that a Transition Program influences, both positively and negatively, a student's absenteeism. According to Blackwell (2008), the principals indicated that improved attendance would be a measurement in determining the effectiveness of the Transition Program; some of the teachers indicated that the Transition Program did not address attendance. Research from a student revealed that the Transition Program was effective in reducing the number of absentees for females, and that males in the Transition Program were more likely to be absent than males in the traditional program (Dyke, 2008). Blackwell's study stated that there is no evidence to conclude that the Transition Program helped male or female student attendance improve. Due to the closeness of the Grade 9 teachers to the students and the influence that they hold, the researcher recommendation for the staff at School X was to develop strategies that educate, advocate, and facilitate the reduction of student absences based on the Transition Program's requirements.

Research Question 2 was designed by the researcher to analyze the impact of teacher and student perceptions of the Transition Program. Grade 9 student survey questions 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, and 17 and teacher survey questions 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 18, 19, and 20 were utilized to express the participants' stance and principles to Research Question 2 of the study. The results of the study determined that the Transition Program

had a positive impact on student successes as defined by the indicators. The researcher found the impact positive to the Transition Program when measures are in place to identify teacher and student perceptions and the relationship of the student learning environment. The researcher's recommendation to the Grade 9 team at the research site is to develop strategies that support Grade 9 teachers to increase positive motivation for Grade 9 students to enhance student learning and academic achievement. The Grade 9 student and teacher survey data supported the researcher's recommendation.

Additional support of the researcher's recommendation comes from literature review and the various literature resources utilized in the study. Akos and Galassi (2004b) conducted a study that compared the perceptions of teacher, student, and parent involvement in middle and high school transitions to develop interventions associated with negative consequences of the transitions. The results from that study showed that high school teachers recommended during the transition that an academic remediation be implemented to enhance academic performance. The study also included after the transition that study skills be developed to increase student performance on academic task (Akos & Galassi). The students indicated that academic performance levels were an area of concern when responding to the study (Akos & Galassi). The justification of the researcher's recommendation was further reinforced by Albert Bandura's theory of efficacy. According to the Bandura's (1989) theory of efficacy, success in Grade 9 almost ensures continuing success throughout the course of a student's high school career. This theory allows students to take ownership of their own learning which enhances student achievement and to collaboratively work well with teachers and peers.

Research Question 3 was designed by the researcher to analyze the impact on the Transition Program's improvement of student performance by the academic indicator of

English 1 between Grade 9 students during the 2011-2012 school year implementation of the Transition Program and Grade 9 students during the 2010-2011 school year prior to the implementation of the Transition Program. Tables 54, 55, and 56 in the study were created to analyze the impact of student achievement levels using the North Carolina English I EOC exam from 2010-2012. The results from the study determined that the Transition Program had both positive and negative impacts on student academic achievement during the 2011-2012 school year. The academic performances of the students were analyzed by the North Carolina English I EOC exam that determines which students meet proficiency according to NCDPI. The comparison between both academic years shows the researcher that the Transition Program had a negative impact on the proficiency levels of it students. However, the results from Grade 9 teacher and student surveys found that the Transition Program did have a positive impact in terms of student academic enhancement. The researcher's recommendation to the research site's administrators and teachers was to become knowledgeable of the North Carolina English I standards. In addition, it is recommended that the administrators create availability for teachers to develop English I formative assessments that would analyze student learning of those standards. The researcher also includes in the recommendations that benchmark and formative assessments be given to the students throughout the academic school year to track those results.

Limitations

A 10-month time constraint was placed on the study as well as permission from the superintendent's office. The study was conducted with a limited perspective of the impact of a Grade 9 Transition Program on student success. As a result, participants in the study came from a narrow academic environment comprised of four academic

departments in School X that taught Grade 9 students. Those academic areas were English, Algebra 1, Earth Environmental Science, and World History. The participants who were selected for this survey were first-year Grade 9 students and teachers who taught those students during semester two of the 2011-2012 school year.

The surveys were administrated to both Grade 9 teachers and Grade 9 students during the 2011-2012 school year. The estimated time for the subject to take the survey was between 10-20 minutes. The superintendent's office wanted to include general information into the survey of Grade 9 students and Grade 9 teachers who also taught those students. Grade 9 students were only allowed to complete the survey during the advisory period of the instructional day. Grade 9 teachers were allowed to complete the teacher survey during their planning period.

Recommendations for Further Research

Once the data from this quantitative cross-sectional study were collected, analyzed, and reported, the researcher provided several recommendations in order to guide future studies based on the researcher's knowledge and experiences from the research topic. Due to the increased national, state, and local standards for the academic achievement and assessment of Grade 9 students, the following are recommendations for future study based on this research. First, future studies should include various local educational agencies and schools. The diversification could increase the scope of a study by socioeconomic classes, students with disabilities, and ethnicities. Second, the primary focus of the case study was in academic departments which included Math, English, Social Studies, and Science. The researcher recommended that the further research be broadened by including various departments such as Career and Technical Education, Fine Arts, Health and Physical Education housed at other local educational agencies and

schools that include Grade 9 students.

Additional support of the researcher's recommendation comes from the literature review and the various literature resources utilized in the study. The various literature resources justify and support the recommendation by facilitating stakeholders to increase academic support for Grade 9 students. Academic concerns dealt with school work and teacher expectations, such as having a tough teacher or teachers who expect too much, having harder schoolwork, or having too much homework (Elias, 2001). Tougher teacher standards for academic work, reduced levels of engagement with teachers and course work, and heightened attention to the consequences of performance all accompany the move to high school (Weiss & Bearman, 2007). Bellanca and Forarty (2003) stated that "when a teacher takes time to introduce the forming skills needed for basic classroom management or to teach the more complex skills at the norm or performing phases, the payoff is always greater mastery of content" (p. 79). Researchers have shown that before and after school tutoring programs improve academic success by helping students with actual class assignments and teaching various strategies that students can generalize to other academic problems (Hock et al., 2001).

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Appendix A

Superintendent’s Letter

Letter of Permission to Urban School District Superintendent

1234 XXXXXXXXX
XXXXX, XXXXXXX XXXX
XXX XX, XXXX

Dear Superintendent:

I am requesting your support of a doctoral dissertation study I am conducting with XXXXX University. The study will be correlating specific Grade 9 transition interventions to academic indicators and retention rates. As this survey is intended to include information representative of School X, it is necessary that information pertaining to this high school be included in the final analyses of information. For this reason, I would like to ask that School X be one of the schools in Urban School District to participate in this study.

Confidentiality will be maintained at all times throughout this process. All participants will remain anonymous throughout the duration of the study. Questions specific to background and experience are for assessment purposes only. The questionnaire survey will between ten to twenty minutes to complete. The results of this study will be made available to you upon request.

Please complete the following information at the bottom of this letter and return this letter in the self-addressed stamped envelope by Monday, XXXXXX. I sincerely appreciate your support of this request. If you have any questions, please contact me directly at (XXX) XXX-XXXX or XXXXXX@XXXXXX-XXXX.edu.

Sincerely,

XXXXXXXXXX
Doctoral Candidate
XXXXXXX University

I give permission for the principals within my school system to participate in this study.
School System: _____
Superintendent's Signature: _____
Date: _____

Appendix B

Parent/Guardian Consent for Participation Letter

XXXXX University-Parent/Guardian Informed Consent

Parent/Guardian Consent for Participation in Grade 9 Transition Program Study

Funding Source: None.
IRB approval #
Principal investigator(s): XXXXX Phone: XXXXXXX
Educational Leadership, Doctorial Email: XXXXXXX

School X High School
XXXXXXX Rd SW
XXXXX NC 12345
(XXX) XXX-XXXX
Institutional Review Board
XXXXXX University

Description of the Study:
You are being asked to give permission for your child to participate in a research study.

The survey will be administrated to the students on one of the following dates XXXXXX or XXXXXX. The number of items for this study will be a total of twenty-two (22) survey question. There are two parts to the Student Survey Questions: Part 1 consists of seventeen (17) Likert-scale score questions and Part 2 consists of five (5) general information questions about the students' background. The estimated time for the subject to take the survey will be between 10-20 minutes.

The purpose of this project was to analyze the impact of a Grade 9 transition program on students using a quantitative research study. Many of us have identified the Grade 9 transitions as a difficult time for all students entering high school. School X High School has identified many of the areas that students struggle with and have worked hard to put a transition plan into place to help students cope with this transition. The study will include subjects that are Grade 9 students and that are enrolled in Grade 9 during the XXXX-XXXX school year. The subjects were selected by a simple random sample for this particular study. The subjects will participate in a Grade 9 student survey dealing with trends of transition into high school. The researcher will be surveying Grade 9 students concerning the transitions they experienced in high school during the XXXX-XXXX school year. An estimated starting date of May XXXX and a conclusion date of June XXXX and dates will be secured to conduct the surveys. A two-week timeframe will allow the researcher to administer the student surveys and teacher surveys conducted by an independent researcher. The results of the study will provide Urban School District information that will help better support these students. The instrument will be a paper student survey. The questions are mostly about the subject's thoughts and feelings about their experiences at School X High School. There are no right or wrong answers. The subject's honesty, to the best of your knowledge, is all that's asked. This survey will be given to other students who are eligible to participate, and will probably last 10-20 minutes

Paper Survey
This research project will include a paper survey of students experience during their XXXX-XXXX school year. This paper survey results will be available to read by the researcher, the IRB, Urban School District, and the following: dissertation chair or committee, other researchers, classes, or as appropriate. The paper survey will be kept for length of the study plus three years and destroyed after that time by shredding the documents.

Initials: _____ Date: _____

Audio Recording
There are no audio recordings that will be made during this study.

Video Recording
There are no audio recordings that will be made during this study.

Risks /Benefits to the Participant:
The direct or indirect potential benefits to the subject will help identify trends and/or other interventions that would help with student successes in Secondary Schools.

The researcher would like to inform parents of any potential risk for the subjects participating in this study. Due to the nature and setting of this study other subjects will be present at the time that your child receives this survey.

If [I/you] have any concerns about the risks or benefits of participating in this study, [I/you] can contact XXXXXXXXX and XXXXXXXX or the IRB office at the number or email indicated above." If there are no direct benefits indicate, "There are no direct benefits."

Initials: _____ Date: _____

Costs and Payments to the Participant:
There are no costs to you or payments made for participating in this study.

Confidentiality and Privacy:
All information obtained in this study is strictly confidential unless disclosure is required by law. Records of subject participation will be stored on file with XXXXXXXX University IRB and Urban School District. XXXXXX University IRB and Urban School District may review research records. The procedures of protecting privacy of subjects' identity are in place. The researcher would like the parents/guardians to know that the subject's ethnicity, and/or sex are not required for this study.

Use of Protected Health Information (PHI):
This study does not involve Protected Health Information.

Initials: _____ Date: _____

Participant's Right to Withdraw from the Study:
You have the right to refuse for your child to participate or withdraw your child at any time. If you do withdraw your child, it will not affect your child's treatment at School X in any way. If you choose to withdraw your child, your child's data will not be destroyed and will be retained for the length of the study plus three years.

Initials: _____ Date: _____

Other Considerations:
If significant new information relating to the study becomes available which may relate to your willingness to have your child continue to participate, this information will be provided to you by the investigators.

Initials: _____ Date: _____

Voluntary Consent by Participant:
I have read the preceding consent form, or it has been read to me, and I fully understand the contents of this document and voluntarily give consent for my child to participate. All of my questions concerning the research have been answered. I hereby agree to have my child participate in this research study. If I have any questions in the future about this study they will be answered by Phillip Johnson. (If applicable: I also voluntarily agree to the release of my PHI as described in this document.) A copy of this form has been given to me. This consent ends at the conclusion of this study.

Child's Name: _____

Parent's/Guardian Signature: _____ Date:_____

Witness's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix C

Informed Consent Child Assent Form Letter

XXXXXXX University Informed Consent for Child Assent Form

Assent for Participation in the Grade 9 Transition Program Study

Funding Source: None.
IRB approval #
Principal investigator(s):XXXXX Phone: XXXXXXX
Educational Leadership, Doctorial Email: XXXXXXX

School X High School
XXXXXXX Rd SW
XXXXX NC 12345
(XXX) XXX-XXXX
Institutional Review Board
XXXXXX University

Description of the Study:
The purpose of this project was to analyze the impact of a Grade 9 transition program on students using a quantitative research study. Many of us have identified the Grade 9 transitions as a difficult time for all students entering high school. School X High School has identified many of the areas that students struggle with and have worked hard to put a transition plan into place to help students cope with this transition. The study will include subjects that are Grade 9 students and that are enrolled in Grade 9 during the XXXX-XXXX school year. The subjects were selected by a simple random sample for this particular study. The subjects will participate in a Grade 9 student survey dealing with trends of transition into high school. The researcher will be surveying Grade 9 students concerning the transitions they experienced in high school during the XXXX-XXXX school year. An estimated starting date of XXXXX and a conclusion date of XXXXX and dates will be secured to conduct the surveys. A two-week timeframe will allow the researcher to administer the student surveys and teacher surveys conducted by an independent researcher. The results of the study will provide Urban School District information that will help better support these students. The instrument will be a paper student survey. The questions are mostly about the subject's thoughts and feelings about their experiences at School X High School. There are no rights or wrong answers. The subject's honesty, to the best of your knowledge, is all that's asked. This survey will be given to other students who are eligible to participate.

The survey will be administrated to the students on one of the following dates XXXXXX or XXXXXX. The number of items for this study will be a total of twenty-two (22) survey question. There are two parts to the Student Survey Questions: Part 1 consists of seventeen (17) Likert-scale score questions and Part 2 consists of five (5) general information questions about the students' background. The estimated time for the subject to take the survey will be between 10-20 minutes.

Paper Survey
This research project will include a paper survey of students experience during their XXXX-XXXX school year. This paper survey results will be available to read by the researcher, the IRB, Urban School District, and the following: dissertation chair or committee, other researchers, classes, or as appropriate. The paper survey will be kept for length of the study plus three years and destroyed after that time by shredding the documents.

Initials: _____ Date: _____

Audio Recording
There are no audio recordings that will be made during this study.

Video Recording
There are no audio recordings that will be made during this study.

Risks /Benefits to the Participant:
The direct or indirect potential benefits to the subject will help identify trends and/or other interventions that would help with student successes in Secondary Schools.
The researcher would like to inform parents of any potential risk for the subjects participating in this study. Due to the nature and setting of this study other subjects will be present at the time that your child receives this survey.

If [I/you] have any concerns about the risks or benefits of participating in this study, [I/you] can contact XXXXXXX and XXXXXXXX or the IRB office at the number or email indicated above." If there are no direct benefits indicate, "There are no direct benefits."

Initials: _____ Date: _____

Costs and Payments to the Participant:
There are no costs to you or payments made for participating in this study.

Non Participation / Leaving the Study:
If you do not like the study you don't have to help or you may stop at any time, and no one will be angry. Please return the survey back to the administrator to be kept on file. The data will not be destroyed. Your information will be kept, even if you leave the study, for three years.

Initials: _____ Date: _____

Other Information:

If anything happens that would change what we just told you, we will tell you right away."

Agreement to be in the Study:

The following must be included exactly as written in bold face type:

I have read this or been told about the study. I agree to be in the study.

Child's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Witness's Signature: _____ Date: _____

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN
I have read the preceding and I give consent for my child to participate in this research project. A copy of this form has been given to me.

Parent/Legal Guardian's Signature: _____Date: _____

Witness's Signature: _____

Appendix D

Grade 9 Student Survey Questions

Grade 9 Student Survey Questions

The following survey is design to evaluate the effectiveness of the Grade 9 transition programs at your school. The instruments that the researcher will use include a teacher survey involving Grade 9 students and those teachers who teach Grade 9 students. It is essential that schools put in place components that ease the transition into high school and provide ongoing support.

The student survey questions will target the exploration of the intervention programs impact on student transition to Grade 9 as it pertains to: (a) Belief that students are motivated to complete their school assignments, (b) belief that students are motivated to attend school, (c) belief that teachers care about their students, (d) belief that students care about their education, and (e) belief that parents are involved with their students education.

The final results will indicate whether the practices in place will have a positive impact on student behavior and their attitudes towards school. The procedures of protecting privacy of subjects' identity are in place by withholding the subjects' name.

Thinking about your school, how much do you agree or disagree with the following? For each statement, please check the appropriate box.

SA = Strongly Agree A = Agree D = Disagree SD = Strongly Disagree
NA = Not Applicable or Not Observed

Questions	SA	A	D	SD	NA
1. I speak to my teachers at least once per week about my grades.					
2. I participate in extra-curriculum activities after school (e.g. athletics/sports, band, sponsored club, etc.)					
3. Classroom disruptions are drawing your attention away from your learning while the teacher is presenting the curriculum.					
4. My teachers show respect to students while at school.					
5. When I am absent from school my teachers provide an opportunity for me to complete my missing assignments within five (5) school days.					
6. I have been absent from school no more than 27 days in a school year during the 2011-2012 school year.					
7. My teachers are prepared for class when the bell starts the instructional period.					
8. When suspended from school I have received academic support from the administrative staff.					
9. My parent(s) or guardian(s) speak to me about					

making better decision while at school during the 2011-2012 school year.					
10. My parent(s) or guardian(s) speak to me about making better decision concerning my behavior while at school during the 2011-2012 school year.					
11. My mentor has made contact with my parent(s) or guardian(s) concerning my academics.					
12. My parent(s) or guardian(s) communicates with my teachers concerning my academic grades.					
13. My teachers are concerned with my success and how I do with my academic grades.					
14. My teachers create classroom activities that make me want to learn new things.					
15. An important reason why I do my schoolwork is because I like to learn new things.					
16. I enjoy working on my assignments when it really makes me think.					
17. My teachers give me positive feedback about my assignments.					

Grade 9 Student Survey Questions
General Information – Please circle one choice for each question.

18. Please indicate your gender:
    A. Male
    B. Female
19. Please indicate your ethnicity:
    C. White
    D. Black
    E. Hispanic
    F. American Indian
    G. Asian
    H. Pacific Islander
    I. Multi Race (Two or More Races)
20. Please indicate the highest level of education by either parent/guardian that they have completed.
    J. High School
    K. Bachelors
    L. Masters
    M. Doctoral
    N. Did not complete High School
    O. Do not know
21. Please indicate whether you have ever been retained or failed to be promoted to the next grade level.
    P. Yes
    Q. No
    R. Do not know

Appendix E

Grade 9 Teacher Survey

Grade 9 Teacher Survey

The following survey is design to evaluate the effectiveness of the Grade 9 transition programs at your school. The instruments that the researcher will use include a teacher survey involving Grade 9 students and those teachers who teach Grade 9 students. It is essential that schools put in place components that ease the transition into high school and provide ongoing support.

The teacher survey questions will target the exploration of the intervention programs impact on student transition to Grade 9 as it pertains to: (a) Teacher perception, (b) academic performance, (c) parent involvement, and (d) attendance.

The final results will indicate whether the practices in place will have a positive impact on student behavior and their attitudes towards school. The procedures of protecting privacy of subjects' identity are in place by withholding the subjects' name. The participation of this survey will in no way be used as part of your teacher evaluation instrument.

The survey will be administrated to the teachers on one of the following dates May 30th 2012 or May 31st, 2012. The number of items for this study will be a total of twenty-six (26) survey question. There are two parts to the Teacher Survey Questions: Part 1 consist of twenty (20) Likert-scale score questions and Part 2 consist of six (6) general information questions about the teachers' background. The estimated time for the subject to take the survey will be between 10-20 minutes.

Thinking about your school, how much do you agree or disagree with the following? For each statement, please check the appropriate box.

SA = Strongly Agree A = Agree D = Disagree SD = Strongly Disagree
NA = Not Applicable or Not Observed

Questions	SA	A	D	SD	NA
1. I am able to teach my students by their individual strengths and weakness.					
2. The Enrichment/Remediation Intervention that is in place at my school enhances Grade 9 students' academic performance.					
3. My school has an effective Enrichment/Remediation program to help students increase their academic performance.					
4. I have access to common formative assessments (CFA) using monitored data collected by stakeholders.					

5. Student-teacher relationships affect overall school success. (e.g., academic achievement, school climate, etc.)					
6. Teachers have a voice in planning and implementing Grade 9 intervention programs that affect student attendance.					
7. My school funds the transition program in order to increase Grade 9 student attendance rate.					
8. Projects covering academic content enhance Grade 9 students motivation to attend School.					
9. My school funds the transition program in order to reduce Grade 9 student absenteeism					
10. My administrative staff has effective measures that are in place to reduce Grade 9 student absenteeism.					
11. My students attend school at least 85% of the school year.					
12. My students care about learning and getting good grades.					
13. My students enjoy being at school during the 2011-2012 school years.					
14. During a typical school day I feel effective with my teaching practices.					
15. My students come to class organized and prepared for learning.					
16. My students have shown academic improvement as a result of parent involvement with curriculum activities (such as open house, curriculum night, etc.).					
17. My students have shown academic improvement as a result of parent involvement with extra-curriculum activities (such as fine arts activities, athletic events, etc.).					

18. Parents respond back to teacher contacts (by phone or email) within twenty-four (24) hours of communication dealing with student academics.					
19. Parent involvement has increased my students' attendance rate.					
20. Parents respond back to teacher contacts (by phone or email) within twenty-four (24) hours of communication dealing with student behaviors.					

Grade 9 Teacher Survey

General Information - Please mark one choice for each question

21. Please indicate your gender:

    A. Male
    B. Female

22. Please indicate your ethnicity:

    C. White
    D. Black
    E. Hispanic
    F. American Indian
    G. Asian
    H. Pacific Islander
    I. Multi Race (Two or More Races)

23. Please indicate the highest level of formal education that you have completed.

    J. Bachelors
    K. Masters
    L. Doctoral

24. Please indicate years of experience in teaching. Where possible exclude extended periods of absence (e.g. career breaks)

    M. 0 – 3 Years
    N. 4 – 10 Years
    O. 10+ Years

25. How long have you been working as a teacher at this school? Where possible exclude extended periods of absence (e.g. career breaks)

    P. 0 – 3 Years
    Q. 4 – 10 Years
    R. 10+ Years

26. Please indicate whether you are a National Board Certified Teacher (NBCT)

    S. Yes
    T. No